
THE REV^D JOHN FLAVEL.
Walker. sc.


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1509/1215

PNEUMATOLOGIA.

A TREATISE OF THE SOUL OF MAN:

WHEREIN

The *Divine Original*, Excellent and Immortal Nature of the Soul are opened; its *Love* and *Inclination* to the Body, with the Neceſſity of its *Separation* from it, conſidered and improved. The *Exiſtence*, *Operations*, and *States* of ſeparated Souls, both in *Heaven* and *Hell*, immediately after Death, aſſerted, diſcuſſed, and variouſly applied. Divers knotty and difficult *Queſtions* about *departed Souls*, both *Philoſophical* and *Theological*, ſtated and determined. The *Invaluable Precioufneſs* of Human Souls, and the various *Artifices* of *Satan* (their profeſſed Enemy) to deſtroy them, diſcovered. And the great *Duty* and *Intereſt* of all Men, ſeaſonably and heartily to comply with the moſt great and gracious Deſign of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, for the Salvation of their Souls, argued and preſſed.

By JOHN FLAVEL,
FORMERLY MINISTER AT DARTMOUTH, IN DEVON.

Ἄνθρωπος διπλᾶς, διὰ τὸ σῶμα θνητὸς, ἀθάνατος δὲ διὰ ψυχήν. Triſm.
Ψυχὴ δὲ ἀθάνατος, καὶ ἀγῆρος ζῆ διὰ παντός. Phocylides.

Quid de Turcis, Tartaris, Moſchis, Indis, Perſis, aliiſque omnibus nunc temporis Barbaris Nationibus dicam? Nemo tam Barbarus, aut impius eſt, qui non ſentiat poſt mortem ſupereſſe loca, in quibus animæ aut pro malefactis puniantur, aut coronentur, delicifque perfruantur pro benefactis. *Zanch. de Animæ immortalitate*, p. 653.

A NEW EDITION, CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE publiſher informs the reader, that this Copy is printed verbatim from the beſt London Edition, and that (where the author has not done it himſelf) the notes, which contain quotations from the learned languages, are tranſlated, for the convenience of the Engliſh reader, and for the moſt part inſerted in the text. We have, alſo, to give this edition every poſſible advantage, added a few original notes, chiefly on the philoſophical parts, where their abſtruſeneſs ſeemed to require it.

THE

LIFE

OF THE REVEREND

Mr. JOHN FLAVEL.

THE family of the FLAVELS derive their pedigree from one who was the third great officer that came over with William the Conqueror; but this worthy divine was far from that weakneſs and vanity to boaſt of any thing of that nature, being of the poet's mind, who ſaid,

Et genus, & proavos, & quæ non fecimus ipſi,
Vix ea noſtra voco——

His father was Mr. Richard Flavel, a painful and eminent miniſter: He was firſt miniſter at Bromſgrove in Worceſterſhire, then at Haſler, and removed from thence to Willerſey in Glouceſterſhire, where he continued till 1660, whence he was ejected upon the reſtoration of King Charles II. becauſe it was a ſequeſtered living, and the incumbent then alive: this did not ſo much affect Mr. Flavel, as that he wanted a fixed place for the exerciſe of his paſtoral function. He was a perſon of ſuch extraordinary piety, that thoſe who converſed with him, ſaid, they never heard one vain word drop from his mouth. A little before the turning out of the Nonconformiſt miniſters, being near Totneſs in Devon, he preached from Hoſea vii. 9. 'The days of viſitation are

'come

'come, the days of recompence are come, Iſrael ſhall 'know it.' His application was ſo cloſe, that it offended ſome people, and occaſioned his being carried before ſome juſtices of the peace; but they could not convict him, ſo that he was diſcharged. He afterwards quitted that country, and his ſon's houſe, which was his retiring place, and came to London, where he continued in a faithful and acceptable diſcharge of his office, till the time of the dreadful plague in 1665, when he was taken and impriſoned in the manner following. He was at Mr. Blake's houſe in Covent Garden, where ſome people had met privately for worſhip: whilſt he was at prayer, a party of ſoldiers broke in upon them with their ſwords drawn, and demanded their preacher, threatening ſome, and flattering others to diſcover him, but in vain. Some of the company threw a coloured cloak over him, and in this diſguiſe he was, together with his hearers, carried to Whitehall; the women were diſmiſſed, but the men detained, and forced to lie all that night upon the bare floor; and becauſe they would not pay five pounds each, were ſent to Newgate, where the peſtilence raged moſt violently, as in other places of the city. Here Mr. Flavel and his wife were ſhut up, and ſeized with the ſickneſs; they were bailed out, but died of the contagion; of which their ſon John had a divine monition given him by a dream, as we ſhall obſerve in its proper place. Mr. Richard Flavel left two ſons behind him, both miniſters of the goſpel, viz. John and Phineas.

John, the eldeſt, was born in Worceſterſhire. It was obſervable, that whilſt his mother lay-in with him, a nightingale made her neſt on the outſide of the chamber-window, where ſhe uſed to ſing moſt ſweetly. He was religiouſly educated by his father; and having profited well at the grammar-ſchools, was ſent early to Oxford, and ſettled a commoner in Univerſity College. He plied his ſtudies hard, and exceeded many of his contemporaries in univerſity learning.

Soon after his commencing bachelor of arts, Mr. Walplate, the miniſter of Diptford, in the county of Devon, was

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was rendered incapable of performing his office, by reaſon of his age and infirmity, and ſent to Oxford for an aſſiſtant: Mr. Flavel, though but young, was recommended to him as a perſon duly qualified, and was accordingly ſettled there by the ſtanding committee of Devon, April 27, 1650, to preach as a probationer and aſſiſtant to Mr. Walplate.

Mr. Flavel, conſidering the weight of his charge, applied himſelf to the work of his calling with great diligence; and being aſſiduous in reading, meditation, and prayer, he increaſed in miniſterial knowlege daily (for he found himſelf, that he came raw enough in that reſpect from the univerſity), ſo that he attained to an high degree of eminency and reputation for his uſeful labours in the church.

About ſix months after his ſettling at Diptford, he heard of an ordination to be at Saliſbury, and therefore went thither with his teſtimonials, and offered himſelf to be examined and ordained by the Preſbytery there. They appointed him a text, upon which he preached to their general ſatisfaction; and having afterwards examined him as to his learning, &c. they ſet him apart to the work of the miniſtry, with prayer and impoſition of hands, on the 17th day of October, 1650.

Mr. Flavel, being thus ordained, returned to Diptford, and after Mr. Walplate's death ſucceeded in the rectory. To avoid all incumbrances from the world, and avocations from his ſtudies and miniſterial work, he choſe a perſon of worth and reputation in the pariſh (of whom he had a good aſſurance that he would be faithful to himſelf, and kind to his pariſhioners), and let him the whole tythes much below the real value, which was very well pleaſing to his people. By this means he was the better able to deal with them in private, ſince the hire of his labours was no-way a hindrance to the ſucceſs of them.

Whilſt he was at Diptford, he married one Mrs. Joan Randall, a pious gentlewoman, of a good family, who died in travail of her firſt child, without being delivered.

His

His year of mourning being expired, his acquaintance and intimate friends adviſed him to marry a ſecond time, [Mrs. Elizabeth Morrice] in conſequence of which he was again very happy. Some time after this ſecond marriage, the people of Dartmouth (a great and noted ſeaport in the county of Devon, formerly under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Anthony Hartford, deceaſed) unanimouſly choſe Mr. Flavel to ſucceed him. They urged him to accept their call, 1. Becauſe there were exceptions made againſt all other candidates, but none againſt him. 2. Becauſe being acceptable to the whole town, he was the more likely to be an inſtrument of healing the breaches amongſt the good people there. 3. Becauſe Dartmouth, being a conſiderable and populous town, required an able and eminent miniſter; which was not ſo neceſſary for a country pariſh, that might beſides be more eaſily ſupplied with another paſtor than Dartmouth.

That which made them more preſſing and earneſt with Mr. Flavel, was this: At a provincial ſynod in that county, Mr. Flavel, though but a young man, was voted into the chair as moderator; where he opened the aſſembly with a moſt devout and pertinent prayer; he examined the candidates who offered themſelves to their trials for the miniſtry with great learning, ſtated the caſes and queſtions propoſed to them with much acuteneſs and judgement, and, in the whole, demeaned himſelf with that gravity, piety, and ſerioufneſs, during his preſidency, that all the miniſters of the aſſembly admired and loved him. The Rev, Mr. Hartford, his predeceſſor at Dartmouth, took particular notice of him, from that time forward contracted a ſtrict friendſhip with him, and ſpoke of him among the magiſtrates and people of Dartmouth, as an extraordinary perſon, who was like to be a great light in the church. This, with their having ſeveral times heard him preach, occaſioned their importunity with Mr. Flavel to come and be their miniſter; upon which, having ſpread his caſe before the Lord, and ſubmitted to the deciſion of his neighbouring miniſters, he was prevailed upon

upon to remove to Dartmouth, to his great loſs in temporals, the rectory of Diptford being a much greater benefice.

Mr. Flavel being ſettled at Dartmouth by the election of the people, and an order from Whitehall by the commiſſioners for approbation of public preachers of the 19th of December, 1656, he was aſſociated with Mr. Allein Geere, a very worthy, but ſickly man. The miniſterial work was thus divided betwixt them; Mr. Flavel was to preach on the Lord's Day at Townſtall, the mother church ſtanding upon a hill without the town; and every fortnight in his turn, at the Wedneſday's lecture in Dartmouth. Here God crowned his labours with many converſions. One of his judicious hearers expreſſed himſelf thus concerning him: "I could ſay much, though not enough, of the excellency of his preaching, of his ſeaſonable, ſuitable, and ſpiritual matter, of his plain expoſitions of ſcripture, his taking method, his genuine and natural deductions, his convincing arguments, his clear and powerful demonſtrations, his heart-ſearching applications, and his comfortable ſupports to thoſe that were afflicted in conſcience. In ſhort, that perſon muſt have a very ſoft head, or a very hard heart, or both, that could ſit under his miniſtry unaffected."

By his unwearied application to ſtudy, he had acquired a great ſtock both of divine and human learning. He was maſter of the controverſies betwixt the Jews and Chriſtians, Papiſts and Proteſtants, Lutherans and Calviniſts, and betwixt the Orthodox and the Arminians and Socinians. He was likewiſe well read in the controverſies about Church Diſcipline, Infant Baptiſm, and Antinomianiſm. He was well acquainted with the School Divinity, and drew up a judicious and ingenious ſcheme of the whole body of that Theology in good Latin, which he preſented to a perſon of quality, but it was never printed. He was ſingularly well verſed and exact in the oriental languages. He had one way of improving his knowledge, which is very proper for young divines; whatever remarkable paſſage he heard in private con-

ference, if he was familiar with the relator, he would desire him to repeat it again, and insert it into his Adversaria: by these methods he acquired a vast stock of proper materials for his popular sermons in the pulpit, and his more elaborate works for the press.

He had an excellent gift of prayer, and was never at a loss in all his various occasions for suitable matter and words: and, which was the most remarkable of all, he always brought with him a broken heart and moving affections; his tongue and spirit were touched with a live coal from the altar, and he was evidently assisted by the holy Spirit of grace and supplication in that divine ordinance. Those who lived in his family, say, that he was always full and copious in prayer, seemed constantly to exceed himself, and rarely made use twice of the expressions.

When the act of uniformity turned him out with the rest of his nonconforming brethren, he did not thereupon quit his relation to his church, he thought the souls of his flock to be more precious than to be so tamely neglected; he took all opportunities of ministring the word and sacraments to them in private meetings, and joined with other ministers in solemn days of fasting and humiliation, to pray that God would once more restore the ark of his covenant unto his afflicted Israel. About four months after that fatal Bartholomew-day, his reverend colleague, Mr. Allein Geere, died, so that the whole care of the flock devolved upon Mr. Flavel, which, though a heavy and pressing burden, he undertook very cheerfully.

Upon the execution of the Oxford act, which banished all nonconforming ministers five miles from any towns which sent members to parliament, he was forced to leave Dartmouth, to the great sorrow of his people, who followed him out of town; and at Townstall church yard they took such a mournful farewel of one another, as the place might very well have been called Bochim. He removed to Slapton, a parish five miles from Darmouth, or any other corporation, which put him out of the legal reach

of

of his adverſaries; here he met with ſignal inſtances of God's fatherly care and protection, and preached twice every Lord's day to ſuch as durſt adventure to hear him, which many of his own people and others did, notwithſtanding the rigour and ſeverity of the act againſt conventicles. He many times ſlipped privately into Dartmouth, where by preaching and converſation he edified his flock, to the great refreſhment of his own ſoul and theirs, though with very much danger, becauſe of his watchful adverſaries, who conſtantly laid wait for him, ſo that he could not make any long ſtay in the town.

In thoſe times Mr. Flavel being at Exeter, was invited to preach by many good people of that city, who for ſafety choſe a wood about three miles from the city to be the place of their aſſembly, where they were broke up by their enemies by that time the ſermon was well begun. Mr. Flavel, by the care of the people, made his eſcape through the middle of his enraged enemies; and though many of his hearers were taken, carried before Juſtice Tuckfield, and fined; yet the reſt, being nothing diſcouraged, re-aſſembled, and carried Mr. Flavel to another wood, where he preached to them without any diſturbance; and, after he had concluded, rode to a gentleman's houſe near the wood, who, though an abſolute ſtranger to Mr. Flavel, entertained him with great civility that night, and next day he returned to Exeter in ſafety. Amongſt thoſe taken at this time, there was a tanner who had a numerous family, and but a ſmall ſtock; he was fined notwithſtanding forty pounds; at which he was nothing diſcouraged, but told a friend, who aſked him how he bore up under his loſs, "That he took the ſpoiling of his goods joyfully, for the ſake of his Lord Jeſus, for whom his life and all that he had was too little."

As ſoon as the nonconformiſts had any reſpite from their trouble, Mr. Flavel laid hold on the opportunity, and returned to Dartmouth, where, during the firſt indulgence granted by King Charles II. he kept open doors, and preached freely to all that would come and hear him; and when that liberty was revoked, he made it his buſineſs

notwithſtanding to preach in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, and ſeldom miſſed of an opportunity of preaching on the Lord's day. During this time, God was pleaſed to deprive him of his ſecond wife, which was a great affliction, ſhe having been a help meet for him; and ſuch an one he ſtood much in need of, as being a man of an infirm and weak conſtitution, who laboured under many infirmities. In convenient time he married a third wife, Mrs. Ann Downe, daughter of Mr. Thomas Downe, miniſter of Exeter, who lived very happily with him eleven years, and left him two ſons.

The perſecution againſt the nonconformiſts being renewed, Mr. Flavel found it unſafe to ſtay at Dartmouth, and therefore reſolved to go to London, where he hoped to be in leſs danger, and to have more liberty to exerciſe his function. The night before he embarked for that end, he had the following premonition by a dream: he thought he was on board the ſhip, and that a ſtorm aroſe which exceedingly terrified the paſſengers; during their conſternation, there ſat writing at the table a perſon of admirable ſagacity and gravity, who had a child in a cradle by him that was very froward; he thought he ſaw the father take up a little whip, and give the child a laſh, ſaying, "Child be quiet, I will diſcipline, but not hurt thee." Upon this Mr. Flavel awaked, and muſing on his dream, he concluded, that he ſhould meet with ſome trouble in his paſſage: his friends being at dinner with him, aſſured him of a pleaſant paſſage, becauſe the wind and weather were very fair; Mr. Flavel replied, "That he was not of their mind, but expected much trouble becauſe of his dream;" adding, "that when he had ſuch repreſentations made to him in his ſleep, they ſeldom or ever failed."

Accordingly, when they were advanced within five leagues of Portland in their voyage, they were overtaken by a dreadful tempeſt, inſomuch that, betwixt one and two in the morning, the maſter and ſeamen concluded, that, unleſs God changed the wind, there was no hopes of life; it was impoſſible for them to weather

ther Portland, ſo that they muſt of neceſſity be wrecked on the rocks or on the ſhore. Upon this Mr. Flavel called all the hands that could be ſpared into the cabin to prayer; but the violence of the tempeſt was ſuch, that they could not prevent themſelves from being thrown from the one ſide unto the other as the ſhip was toſſed; and not only ſo, but mighty ſeas broke in upon them, as if they would have drowned them in the very cabin. Mr. Flavel in this danger took hold of the two pillars of the cabin bed, and calling upon God, begged mercy for himſelf and the reſt in the ſhip. Amongſt other arguments in prayer, he made uſe of this, that if he and his company periſhed in that ſtorm, the name of God would be blaſphemed, the enemies of religion would ſay, that though he eſcaped their hands on ſhore, yet Divine vengeance had overtaken him at ſea. In the midſt of his prayer his faith and hope were raiſed, inſomuch that he expected a gracious anſwer: ſo that, committing himſelf and his company to the mercy of God, he concluded the duty. No ſooner was prayer ended, but one came down from the deck, crying, "Deliverance! Deliverance! God is a God hearing prayer! In a moment the wind is come fair weſt!" And ſo ſailing before it they were brought ſafely to London. Mr. Flavel found many of his old friends there; and God raiſed him new ones, with abundance of work, and extraordinary encouragement in it. During his ſtay in London he married his fourth wife, a widow gentlewoman, (daughter to Mr. George Jefferies, formerly miniſter of King's-Bridge.)

Mr. Flavel, while he was in London, narrowly eſcaped being taken, with the reverend Mr. Jenkins, at Mr. Fox's in Moor-fields, where they were keeping a day of faſting and prayer. He was ſo near, that he heard the inſolence of the officers and ſoldiers to Mr. Jenkins when they had taken him; and obſerved it in his diary, that Mr. Jenkins might have eſcaped as well as himſelf, had it not been for a piece of vanity in a lady, whoſe long train hindered his going down ſtairs,

Mr.

Mr. Jenkins, out of too great civility, having let her paſs before him.

Mr. Flavel after this returned to Dartmouth, where with his family and dear people he bleſſed God for his mercies towards him. He was, a little time after, confined cloſe priſoner to his houſe, where many of his dear flock ſtole in over night, or betimes on the Lord's day in the morning, to enjoy the benefits of his labours, and ſpend the ſabbath in hearing, praying, ſinging of pſalms, and holy diſcourſes.

Mr. Jenkins, above mentioned, dying in priſon, his people gave Mr. Flavel a call to the paſtoral office among them, and Mr. Reeves's people did the like. Mr. Flavel communicated thoſe calls unto his flock, and kept a day of prayer with them to beg direction from God in this important affair; he was graciouſly pleaſed to anſwer him by fixing Mr. Flavel's reſolution to ſtay with his flock at Dartmouth. Many arguments were made uſe of to perſuade him to come to London, as, that ſince he was turned out by the act of uniformity, he had had but very little maintenance from his church, that thoſe at London were rich and numerous congregations; that he had a family and children to provide for; and that the city was a theatre of honour and reputation. But none of thoſe things could prevail with him to leave his poor people at Dartmouth.

In 1687, when it pleaſed God ſo to over-rule affairs, that King James II. thought it his intereſt to diſpenſe with the penal laws againſt them, Mr. Flavel, who had formerly been confined to a corner, ſhone brightly, as a flaming beacon upon the top of an hill. His affectionate people prepared a large place for him, where God bleſſed his labours to the conviction of many people, by his ſermons on Rev. iii. 20. 'Behold I ſtand at the door 'and knock.' This encouraged him to print thoſe ſermons under the title of England's Duty, &c. hoping that it might do good abroad, as well as in his own congregation. He had made a vow to the Lord under his confinement, that if he ſhould be once more entruſted with

with public liberty, he would improve it to the advantage of the goſpel: this he performed in a moſt conſcientious manner, preaching twice every Lord's day, and lectured every Wedneſday, in which he went over moſt part of the third chapter of St. John, ſhewing the indiſpenſible neceſſity of regeneration. He preached likewiſe every Thurſday before the ſacrament, and then after examination admitted communicants. He had no aſſiſtance on ſacrament days, ſo that he was many times almoſt ſpent before he diſtributed the elements. When the duty of the day was over, he would often complain of a ſore breaſt, and aking head, and a pained back; yet he would be early at ſtudy again next Monday. He allowed himſelf very little recreation, accounting time a precious jewel that ought to be improved at any rate.

He was not only a zealous preacher in the pulpit, but a ſincere Chriſtian in his cloſet, frequent in ſelf-examination, as well as in preſſing it upon others; being afraid, leſt while he preached to others, he himſelf ſhould be a caſt away. To prove this, I ſhall tranſcribe what follows from his own diary.

"To make ſure of eternal life, ſaid he, is the great buſineſs which the ſons of death have to do in this world. Whether a man conſider the immortality of his own ſoul, the ineffable joys and glory of heaven, the extreme and endleſs torments of hell, the inconceivable ſweetneſs of peace of conſcience, or the miſery of being ſubject to the terrors thereof; all theſe put a neceſſity, a ſolemnity, a glory upon this work. But, Oh! the difficulties and dangers attending it! How many and how great are theſe? What judgement, faithfulneſs, reſolution, and watchfulneſs, doth it require? Such is the deceitfulneſs, darkneſs, and inconſtancy of our hearts, and ſuch the malice, policy and diligence of Satan to manage and improve it, that he who attempts this work had need both to watch his ſeaſons for it, and frequently look up to God for his guidance and illumination, and to ſpend many ſad and ſerious thoughts before he adventure upon a determination and concluſion of the ſtate of his ſoul.

"To

" To the end therefore that this moſt important work may not miſcarry in my hands, I have collected, with all the care I can, the beſt and ſoundeſt characters I can find in the writings of our modern divines, taken out of the ſcripture, and by their labours illuſtrated and prepared for uſe, that I might make a right application of them.

" 1. I have earneſtly beſought the Lord for the aſſiſtance of his Spirit, which can only manifeſt my own heart unto me, and ſhow me the true ſtate thereof, which is that thing my ſoul doth moſt earneſtly deſire to know; and I hope the Lord will anſwer my deſire therein, according to his promiſes, Luke xi. 13. John xiv. 26.

" 2. I have endeavoured to caſt out and lay aſide ſelf-love, leſt my heart being prepoſſeſſed therewith, my judgement ſhould be perverted, and become partial in paſſing ſentence on my eſtate. I have, in ſome meaſure, brought my heart to be willing to judge and condemn myſelf for an hypocrite, if ſuch I ſhall be found on trial as to approve myſelf for ſincere and upright. Yea, I would have it ſo far from being grievous to me ſo to do, that if I have been all this while miſtaken and deceived, I ſhall rejoice, and bleſs the Lord with my ſoul, that now at laſt it may be diſcovered to me and I may be ſet right, though I lay the foundation new again. This I have laboured to bring my heart to, knowing that thouſands have daſhed and ſplit to pieces upon this rock. And indeed he that will own the perſon of a judge, muſt put off the perſon of a friend.

" 3. It hath been my endeavour to keep upon my heart a deep ſenſe of that great judgement day throughout this work; as knowing by experience what a potent influence this hath on the conſcience, to make it deliberate, ſerious, and faithful in its work; and therefore I have demanded of my own conſcience, before the reſolution of each queſtion, O my conſcience! deal faithfully with me in this particular, and ſay no more to me than thou wilt own and ſtand to in the great day, when the counſels of all hearts ſhall be made manifeſt.

" 4 Hav-

"4. Having ſeriouſly weighed each mark, and conſidered wherein the weight and ſubſtance of it lieth, I have gone to the Lord in prayer for his aſſiſtance, ere I have drawn up the anſwer of my conſcience; and as my heart hath been perſuaded therein, ſo have I determined and reſolved; what hath been clear to my experience, I have ſo ſet down; and what hath been dubious, I have here left it ſo.

"5. I have made choice of the fitteſt ſeaſons I had for this work, and ſet to it when I have found my heart in the moſt quiet and ſerious frame. For as he that will ſee his face in a glaſs, muſt be fixed, not in motion, or in the water, muſt make no commotion in it; ſo it is in this caſe.

"6. Laſtly, To the end I may be ſucceſsful in this work, I have laboured all along carefully to diſtinguiſh betwixt ſuch ſins as are grounds of doubting, and ſuch as are only grounds of humiliation; knowing that not every evil is a ground of doubting, though all, even the ſmalleſt infirmities, adminiſter matter of humiliation: and thus I have deſired to enterprize this great buſineſs. O Lord, aſſiſt thy ſervant, that he may not miſtake herein; but, if his conſcience do now condemn him, he may lay a better foundation whilſt he hath time; and if it ſhall now acquit him, he may alſo have boldneſs in the day of judgement."

Theſe things being previouſly diſpatched, he tried himſelf by the ſcripture marks of ſincerity and regeneration: by this means he attained to a well grounded aſſurance, the raviſhing comforts of which were many times ſhed abroad in his ſoul; this made him a powerful and ſucceſsful preacher, as one who ſpoke from his own heart to thoſe of others. He preached what he felt, what he had handled, what he had ſeen and taſted of the word of life, and they felt it alſo.

We may gueſs what a ſweet and bleſſed intercourſe he had with heaven, from that hiſtory we meet with in his Treatiſe on the Soul, which I refer to, and likewiſe from that revelation he had of his father and mother's death, in

the ſame work. He was a mighty wreſtler with God in ſecret prayer, and particularly begged of him to crown his ſermons, printed books, and private diſcourſes, with the converſion of poor ſinners, a work which his heart was much ſet upon. It pleaſed God to anſwer him by many inſtances, of which the two that follow deſerve peculiar notice.

In 1673, there came into Dartmouth port a ſhip of Pool, in her return from Virginia; the ſurgeon of this ſhip, a luſty young man of 23 years of age, fell into a deep melancholy, which the devil improved to make him murder himſelf. This he attempted on the Lord's day early in the morning, when he was in bed with his brother; he firſt cut his own throat with a knife he had prepared on purpoſe, and leaping out of the bed, thruſt it likewiſe into his ſtomach, and ſo lay wallowing in his own blood, till his brother awaked and cried for help. A phyſician and ſurgeon were brought, who concluded the wound in his throat mortal; they ſtitched it up however, and applied a plaiſter, but without hopes of cure, becauſe he already breathed through the wound, and his voice was become inarticulate. Mr. Flavel came to viſit him in this condition, and apprehending him to be within a few minutes of eternity, laboured to prepare him for it; he aſked him his own apprehenſions of his condition, and the young man anſwered, that he hoped in God for eternal life. Mr. Flavel replied, that he feared his hopes were ill grounded: the ſcripture telling us, that 'no murderer 'hath eternal life abiding in him:' ſelf-murder was the groſſeſt of all murder, &c. Mr. Flavel inſiſted ſo much upon the aggravation of the crime, that the young man's conſcience began to fail, his heart began to melt, and then he broke out into tears, bewailing his ſin and miſery, and aſked Mr. Flavel if there yet might be any hope for him? He told him there might; and finding him altogether unacquainted with the nature of faith and repentance, he opened them to him. The poor man ſucked in this doctrine greedily, prayed with great vehemence to God that he would work them on his ſoul, and intreated Mr. Flavel

vel to pray with him, and for him, that he might be, though late, a ſincere goſpel penitent, and ſound believer. Mr. Flavel prayed with him accordingly, and it pleaſed God exceedingly to melt the young man's heart, during the performance of that duty. He was very loth to part with Mr. Flavel, but the duty of the day obliging him to be gone, in a few words he ſummed up thoſe counſels that he thought moſt neceſſary, and ſo took his farewel of him, never expecting to ſee him any more in this world. But it pleaſed God to order it otherwiſe; the young man continued alive contrary to all expectation, panted earneſtly after the Lord Jeſus, and no diſcourſe was pleaſing to him, but that of Chriſt and faith. In this frame Mr. Flavel found him in the evening: he rejoiced greatly when he ſaw him come again, intreated him to continue his diſcourſe upon thoſe ſubjects, and told him, Sir, the Lord hath given me repentance for this and all my other ſins; I ſee the evil of them now, ſo as I never ſaw them before! O I loath myſelf! I do alſo believe; Lord, help my unbelief. I am heartily willing to take Chriſt upon his own terms; but one thing troubles me; I doubt this bloody ſin will not be pardoned. Will Jeſus Chriſt, ſaid he, apply his blood to me, that have ſhed my own blood? Mr. Flavel told him, that the Lord Jeſus ſhed his blood for them who with wicked hands had ſhed his own blood, which was a greater ſin than the ſhedding of his; to which the wounded man replied, I will caſt myſelf upon Chriſt, let him do what he will. In this condition Mr. Flavel left him that night.

Next morning his wounds were to be opened, and the ſurgeon's opinion was, that he would immediately expire; Mr. Flavel was again requeſted to give him a viſit, which he did, found him in a very ſerious frame, and prayed with him. The wound in his ſtomach was afterwards opened, when the ventricle was ſo much ſwoln, that it came out at the orifice of the wound, and lay like a livid diſcoloured tripe upon his body, and was alſo cut through; every one thought it impoſſible for him to live; however, the ſurgeon enlarged the orifice of the wound, fomented

it, and wrought the ventricle again into his body, and, ſtitching up the wound, left his patient to the diſpoſal of Providence.

It pleaſed God that he was cured of thoſe dangerous wounds in his body; and, upon ſolid grounds of a rational charity, there was reaſon to believe that he was alſo cured of that more dangerous wound which ſin had made in his ſoul. Mr. Flavel ſpent many hours with him during his ſickneſs; and when the ſurgeon returned to Pool, after his recovery, Mr. Samuel Hardy, that worthy miniſter there, thanked Mr. Flavel in a letter, for the great pains he had taken with that young man, and congratulated his ſucceſs, aſſuring him, that if ever a great and thorough work was wrought, it was upon that man.

The ſecond inſtance is this: Mr. Flavel being in London in 1673, his old bookſeller, Mr. Boulter, gave him this following relation, viz. That ſome time before, there came into his ſhop a ſparkiſh gentleman to inquire for ſome play books: Mr. Boulter told him he had none, but ſhewed him Mr. Flavel's little treatiſe of "Keeping the Heart," intreated him to read it, and aſſured him it would do him more good than play books. The gentleman read the title, and glancing upon ſeveral pages here and there, broke out into theſe and ſuch other expreſſions, What a damnable phanatic was he who made this book! Mr. Boulter begged of him to buy and read it, and told him he had no cauſe to cenſure it ſo bitterly; at laſt he bought it, but told him he would not read it. What will you do with it then? ſaid Mr. Boulter. Will you tear and burn it, ſaid he, and ſend it to the devil? Mr. Boulter told him, then he ſhould not have it. Upon this the gentleman promiſed to read it; and Mr. Boulter told him, if he diſliked it upon reading, he would return him his money. About a month after, the gentleman came to the ſhop again in a very modeſt habit, and, with a ſerious countenance, beſpeaks Mr. Boulter thus; Sir, I moſt heartily thank you for putting this book into my hands; I bleſs God that moved you to do it, it hath ſaved my ſoul; bleſſed be God that ever I came into your ſhop.

And

And then he bought a hundred more of thoſe books of him, told him he would give them to the poor who could not buy them, and ſo left him, praiſing and admiring the goodneſs of God. Thus it pleaſed God to bleſs the ſermons, diſcourſes, and writings of Mr. Flavel.

Many times, when he preached abroad, he has had letters ſent him from unknown perſons, informing him how God had bleſſed his miniſtry to their ſouls, and converted them from being bitter enemies to religion. This encouraged him, when he rode abroad, not only to accept of invitations to preach, but many times to offer his labours unto thoſe that would be pleaſed to hear him; though, for this, he had no occaſion where he was known, the people being generally importunate with him. One day, after a long and hard journey, an intimate friend of his, out of a tender regard to him, preſſed him with cogent arguments to forbear preaching at that ſeaſon, but could not prevail with him; his bowels of compaſſion to needy and periſhing ſouls made him overlook all conſiderations of himſelf; he preached an excellent ſermon, by which there was one converted, as he declared himſelf afterwards upon his admiſſion to the Lord's table.

The laſt ſermon that he preached to his people at Dartmouth, was on a public day of faſting and humiliation; in the cloſe of which he was enlarged in ſuch an extraordinary manner, when offering up praiſes to God for mercies received, that he ſeemed to be in an ecſtaſy: this happened about a week before his death, and may juſtly be accounted a foretaſte of thoſe heavenly raptures that he now enjoys amongſt the bleſſed ſpirits above.

The laſt ſermon he preached was on the 21ſt of June, 1691, at Aſhburton, from I. Cor. x. 12. 'Wherefore, 'let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.' It was a very pathetical and excellent diſcourſe, tending to awaken careleſs profeſſors, and to ſtir them up to be ſolicitous about their ſouls. After having preached this ſermon, he went to Exeter; and at Topſham, within three miles of that city, he preſided as moderator in an aſſembly of the nonconformiſt miniſters of Devonſhire, who unanimouſly

mouſly voted him into the chair. The occaſion of their meeting was about an union betwixt the Preſbyterians and Independents, which Mr. Flavel was very zealous to promote, and brought to ſo good an iſſue in thoſe parts, that the miniſters declared their ſatisfaction with the heads of agreement concluded on by the London miniſters of thoſe denominations. Mr. Flavel cloſed the work of the day with prayer and praiſes, in which his ſpirit was carried out with wonderful enlargement and affection.

He wrote a letter to an eminent miniſter in London, with an account of their proceedings, the ſame day that he died; Providence ordering it ſo, that he ſhould finiſh that good work his heart was ſo intent upon, before he finiſhed his courſe.

The manner of his death was ſudden and ſurpriſing: his friends thought him as well that day in the evening of which he died, as he had been for many years: towards the end of ſupper, he complained of a deadneſs in one of his hands, that he could not lift it to his head. This ſtruck his wife, and his friends about him, into an aſtoniſhment: they uſed ſome means to recover it to its former ſtrength; but, inſtead thereof, to their great grief, the diſtemper ſeized upon all one ſide of his body. They put him to bed with all ſpeed, and ſent for phyſicians, but to no purpoſe; his diſtemper prevailed upon him ſo faſt, that in a ſhort time it made him ſpeechleſs. He was ſenſible of his approaching death; and when they carried him up ſtairs, expreſſed his opinion, that it would be the laſt time; but added, "I know that it will be well with me;" which were ſome of his laſt words. Thus died this holy man of God ſuddenly, and without pain, not giving ſo much as one groan. He exchanged this life for a better, on the 26th day of June, 1691, in the 61ſt year of his age.

His corpſe was carried from Exeter to Dartmouth, attended by ſeveral miniſters, and a great many other perſons of good quality; abundance of people rode out from Dartmouth, Totneſs, Newton, Aſhburton, and other places, to meet the corpſe: when it was taken out of the hearſe

hearſe at the water-ſide, his people and other friends could not forbear expreſſing the ſenſe of their great loſs by floods of tears, and a bitter lamentation. It was interred the ſame night in Dartmouth church, and next day Mr. George Troſſe, a miniſter of Exeter, preached his funeral ſermon from Eliſha's lamentation upon the tranſlation of Elijah, II. Kings ii. 12. 'My father, my father, 'the chariot of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof.'

We ſhall conclude with a character of Mr. Flavel.—He was a man of a middle ſtature, and full of life and activity. He was very thoughtful, and, when not diſcourſing or reading, much taken up in meditation, which made him digeſt his notions well. He was ready to learn from every body, and as free to communicate what he knew. He was bountiful to his own relations, and very charitable to the poor, but eſpecially to the houſhold of faith, and the neceſſitous members of his own church, to whom, during their ſickneſs, he always ſent ſuitable ſupplies. He freely taught academical learning to four young men, whom he bred to the miniſtry, and one of them he maintained all the while at his own charge. He was exceedingly affectionate to all the people of Dartmouth, of which we ſhall give one remarkable inſtance. When our fleet was firſt engaged with the French, he called his people together to a ſolemn faſt, and, like a man in an agony, wreſtled with God in prayer for the church and nation, and particularly for the poor ſeamen of Dartmouth, that they might obtain mercy; the Lord heard and anſwered him, for not one of that town was killed in the fight, though many of them were in the engagement. As he was a faithful ambaſſador to his maſter, he made his example the rule of his own practice; and was ſo far from reviling again thoſe that reviled him, that he prayed for thoſe that deſpitefully uſed him; one remarkable inſtance of which is as follows: in 1685, ſome of the people of Dartmouth, accompanied too by ſome of the magiſtrates, made up his effigies, carried it through the ſtreets in deriſion, with the covenant and bill of excluſion pinned to it, and ſet it upon a bonfire, and burnt

burnt it: ſome of the ſpectators were ſo much affected with the reproach and ignominy done to this reverend and pious miniſter, that they wept, and others ſcoffed and jeered; it was obſervable, that at the very ſame time, though he knew nothing of the matter, he was heaping coals of fire of another nature upon the heads of thoſe wicked men; for he was then praying for the town of Dartmouth, its magiſtrates and inhabitants; and when news was brought him, upon the concluſion of his prayer, what they had been doing, he lift up this prayer unto God for them in our Saviour's words, 'Father, forgive 'them, for they know not what they do.'

EPISTLE

EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To the much honoured his dear kinſman, Mr. JOHN FLAVEL, *and* Mr. EDWARD CRISP, *of London, Merchants; and the reſt of my worthy friends in* London, Ratcliffe, Shadwell, *and* Limehouſe; *Grace, Mercy, and Peace.*

Dear Friends,

"AMONG all the creatures in this world, none deſerves to be ſtiledreat but Man; and in man nothing is found worthy of that epithet but his ſoul."

The ſtudy and knowledge of the ſoul was therefore always reckoned a rich and neceſſary improvement of time. All ages have magnified theſe two words, "know thyſelf," as an oracle deſcending from heaven.

"No knowledge," ſaith Bernard, "is better than that whereby we know ourſelves: leave other matters therefore, and ſearch thyſelf; let thy thoughts, as it were, circulate, begin and end there."

The ſtudy and knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt muſt ſtill be allowed to be moſt excellent and neceſſary: but yet the worth and neceſſity of Chriſt is unknown to men, till the value, wants, and dangers of their own ſouls are firſt diſcovered to them.

The diſaffection of men to the ſtudy of their own ſouls is the more to be admired, not only becauſe of the weight and neceſſity of it, but the alluring pleaſure and ſweetneſs

that is found therein. What Cardan ſpeaks is experimentally felt by many, "that ſcarce any thing is more pleaſant and delectable to the ſoul of man, than to know what he is, what he may and ſhall be, the viciſſitudes of this preſent world, and what thoſe divine and ſupreme things are which he is to enjoy after death:" for we are creatures conſcious to ourſelves of an immortal nature, and that we have ſomething about us which muſt overlive this mortal fleſh, and that we ſhall not ceaſe to *be*, when we ceaſe to *breathe*.

And certainly, my friends, diſcourſes of the ſoul and its immortality, of heaven and of hell, the next and only receptacles of unbodied ſpirits, were never more ſeaſonable and neceſſary than in this atheiſtical age of the world, wherein all ſerious piety and thoughts of immortality are ridiculed and hiſſed out of the company of many; as if thoſe old condemned heretics, who aſſerted the corruptibility and mortality of the ſoul as well as body, had been again revived in our days.

And as the atheiſm of ſome, ſo the careleſſneſs of the moſt, needs and calls for ſuch potent remedies as diſcourſes of this kind do plentifully afford. I dare appeal to your charitable judgements, whether the converſations of the many do indeed look like a ſerious purſuit of heaven, and a flight from hell?

Long have my thoughts bent towards this great and excellent ſubject, and many earneſt deſires have I had to know what I ſhall be when I breathe not. But when I had engaged my meditations about it, two great difficulties oppoſed the farther progreſs of my thoughts therein: namely, 1. The difficulty of the ſubject I had choſen; and, 2. The diſtractions of the times in which I was to write upon it.

1. As for the ſubject, ſuch is the ſubtilty and ſublimity of its nature, and ſuch the knotty controverſies in which it is involved, that it much better deſerves that inſcription than Minerva's temple at Saum did, "Never did any mortal reveal me plainly." It is but little that the moſt clear and ſharp-ſighted diſcern of their own ſouls now in the

the ſtate of compoſition; and what then can we poſitively and diſtinctly know of the life they live in the ſtate of ſeparation? The darkneſs in which theſe things are involved, greatly exerciſe even the greateſt wits, and frequently elude and fruſtrate the moſt generous attempts. Many great ſcholars, whoſe natural and acquired abilities ſingularly qualified them to make a clearer diſcovery, have laboured in this field even to ſweat and paleneſs, and done little more but entangle themſelves and the ſubject more than before. This cannot but diſcourage new attempts.

And yet without ſome knowledge of the ſubjective capacity of our ſouls to enjoy the good of the world to come, even in a ſtate of abſence from the body, a principal relief muſt be cut off from them under the great and manifold trials they are to encounter in this.

As for myſelf, I aſſure you, I am deeply ſenſible of the inequality of my ſhoulders to this burden; and have often thought of that neceſſary caution of the poet, (A) to wield and poiſe the burden as porters uſed to do, before I undertook it. Zuinglius blamed Caroloſtadius (as ſome may do me) for undertaking the controverſy of that age, becauſe, ſaith he, his ſhoulders are too weak for it.

And yet I know man's labours proſper not according to the art and elegancy of the compoſure, but according to the divine bleſſing which accompanies them. Ruffinus tells us of a learned philoſopher at the Council of Nice, who ſtoutly defended his theſis againſt the greateſt wits and ſcholars there, and yet was at laſt fairly vanquiſhed by a man of no extraordinary parts: of which conqueſt the philoſopher gave this candid and ingenuous account:—"Againſt words, ſaid he, I oppoſed words; and what was ſpoken I overthrew by the art of ſpeaking: but when inſtead of words, power came out of the mouth of the ſpeaker, words could no longer withſtand truth,

(A) "Examine well, ye writers, weigh with care
What ſuits your genius, what your ſtrength can bear;
For when a well-proportioned theme you chuſe,
Nor words, nor method will their aid refuſe."
[HORACE's Art of Poetry.]

nor man oppoſe the power of God." O that my weak endeavours might proſper under the like influence of the Spirit upon the hearts of them that ſhall read this inartificial, but well-meant diſcourſe!

I am little concerned about the contempts and cenſures of faſtidious readers. I have reſolved to ſay nothing that exceeds ſobriety, nor to provoke any man, except my diſſent from him ſhould do ſo. Perhaps there are ſome doubts relating to this ſubject, which will never be fully ſolved till we come to heaven. For man by the fall being leſs than himſelf, doth not underſtand himſelf, nor will ever perfectly do ſo, until he is fully reſtored to himſelf, which will not be whilſt he dwells in a body of ſin and death. And yet it is to me paſt doubt, that this, as well as other ſubjects, might have been much more cleared than it is, if inſtead of the proud contentions of maſterly wits for victory, all had humbly and peaceably applied themſelves to the impartial ſearch of truth. Truth, like an orient pearl in the bottom of a river, would have diſcovered itſelf by its native luſtre and radiancy, had not the feet of heathen philoſophers, cunning atheiſts, and daring ſchool divines, diſturbed and fouled the ſtream.

2. As the difficulties of the ſubject are many, ſo many have been the interruptions I have met with whilſt it was under my hand; which I mention for no other end but to procure a more favourable cenſure from you, if it appears leſs exact than you expected to find it. Such as it is I do, with much reſpect and affection, tender it to your hands, humbly requeſting the bleſſing of the Spirit may accompany it to your hearts. If you will but allow yourſelves to think cloſe to the matter before you, I doubt not but you may find ſomewhat in it apt both to inform your minds, and quicken your affections. I know you have a multiplicity of buſineſs, but yet I hope your great concern makes all others daily to give place; and that how clamorous and importunate ſoever the affairs of this world are, you both can and do find time to ſit alone, and think on the more important buſineſs you have to do.

My

My friends, we are borderers upon eternity; we live upon the confines of the ſpiritual and immaterial world. We muſt ſhortly be aſſociated with bodileſs beings, and ſhall have (after a few days are paſt) no more concerns for meat, drink, and ſleep, buying and ſelling, habitations and relations, than the angels of God now have. Beſides we live here in a ſtate of trial. Man is one in whom both worlds meet; his body participates of the lower, his ſoul of the upper world. Hence it is he finds ſuch tugging and pulling this way, and that way; upward, and downward; both worlds as it were contending for this invaluable prize, the precious ſoul. All Chriſt's ordinances are inſtituted, and his officers ordained for no other uſe or end, but the ſalvation of ſouls: books are valuable according as they conduce to this end. How rich a reward of my labours ſhall I account it, if this Treatiſe of the Soul may but promote the ſanctification and ſalvation of any of my readers.

To your hands I firſt tender it. It becomes your property, not only as a debt of juſtice, the fulfilling of a promiſe made you long ſince upon your joint and earneſt deſires for the publication of it; but as an acknowledgement of the many favours I have received from you. To one of you I ſtand obliged in the bond of relation and under the ſenſe of many kindneſſes, beyond whatever ſuch a degree of relation can be ſuppoſed to exact.

You have here a ſuccinct account of the nature, faculties, and original of the ſoul of man, as alſo of its infuſion into the body by God, without himſelf being the author of ſin reſulting from that union. You will alſo find the breath of your noſtrils to be the bond which holds your ſouls and bodies in a perſonal union, and that whilſt the due temperature of the body remains and breath continues, your ſouls hang as by a weak and ſlender thread, over the ſtate of a vaſt eternity in heaven or in hell: which will inform you both of the value of your breath, and the beſt way of improving it, whilſt you enjoy it.

The

The immortality of the ſoul is here aſſerted, proved and vindicated from the moſt conſiderable objections; ſo that it will evidently appear to you, by this diſcourſe, you do not ceaſe to be, when you ceaſe to breathe: and ſeeing they will outlive all temporal enjoyments, they muſt neceſſarily periſh, as to all their joys, comforts, and hopes, which is all the death that can be incident to an immortal ſpirit, if they be not in a proper ſeaſon ſecured and provided of that never-periſhing food of ſouls, God in Chriſt, their portion for ever.

Here you will find the grounds and reaſons of that ſtrong inclination which you all feel them to have to your bodies, and the neceſſity (notwithſtanding that) of their divorce and ſeparation, and that it would manifeſtly be to their prejudice if it ſhould be otherwiſe. And to overcome the unreaſonable averſions of believers, and and bring them to a more becoming, cheerful ſubmiſſion to the laws of death, whenſoever the writ of ejection ſhall be ſerved upon them; you will here find a repreſentation of that bleſſed life, comely order, and moſt delightful employment of the incorporeal people inhabiting the city of God: wherein, beſide thoſe ſweet meditations which are proper to feaſt your hungry affections, you will meet with divers curious and uſeful queſtions ſtated and reſolved; which will be a grateful entertainment to your inquiſitive minds.

It is poſſible they may be cenſured by ſome as undeterminable and unprofitable curioſities; but as I hate a preſumptuous intruſion into unrevealed ſecrets, ſo I think it a weakneſs to be diſcouraged in the ſearch of truth, ſo far as it is fit to trace it, by ſuch cauſeleſs cenſures. Nor am I ſenſible I have in any thing tranſgreſſed the bounds of Chriſtian ſobriety, to gratify the palate of a nice and delicate reader.

I have alſo ſet before the reader an idea or repreſentation of the ſtate and caſe of damned ſouls, that, if it be the will of God, a ſeaſonable diſcovery of hell may be the means of ſome mens recovery out of the danger of it; and cloſed up the whole with a demonſtration of the invaluable

invaluable precioufneſs of ſouls, and the ſeveral dangerous ſnares and artifices of Satan, their profeſſed enemy, to deſtroy and caſt them away for ever.

This is the deſign and general ſcope of this treatiſe. And O that God would grant me my heart's deſire on your behalf in the peruſal of it! even that it may prove a ſanctified inſtrument in his hand both to prepare you for, and bring you in love with the unbodied life, to make you look with pleaſure into your graves, and die by conſent of will, as well as neceſſity of nature. I remember Dr. Staughton, in a ſermon preached before King James, relates a ſtrange ſtory of a little child in a ſhipwreck faſt aſleep upon its mother's lap, as ſhe ſat upon a piece of the wreck amidſt the waves: the child being awakened with the noiſe, aſked the mother what thoſe things were; ſhe told it they were drowning waves to ſwallow them up: the child with a pretty ſmiling countenance, begged a ſtroke from its mother to beat away thoſe naughty waves, and chid them as if they had been its playmates. Death will ſhortly ſhipwreck your bodies; your ſouls will ſet upon your lips, ready to expire, as they upon the wreck ready to go down: would it not be a comfortable and moſt becoming frame of mind to ſit there with as little dread as this little one did among the terrible waves? Surely if our faith had but firſt united us with Chriſt, and then looſed our hearts from this enchanting and enſnaring world, we might make a fair ſtep towards this moſt deſireable temper: but unbelief and earthly mindedneſs make us loth to venture.

I bluſh to think what bold adventures thoſe men made, who upon the contemplation of the properties of a deſpicable ſtone, firſt adventured quite out of ſight of land under its conduct and direction, and ſecurely truſting both their lives and eſtates to it, when all the eyes of heaven were vailed from them, amidſt the dark waters, and thick clouds of the ſky; when I either ſtart or at leaſt give an unwilling ſhrug, at adventuring out of the ſight of this world, under the more ſure and ſteady direction

rection and conduct of faith and the promiſes. To cure theſe evils in my own and the reader's hearts theſe things are written, and in much reſpect and love tendered to your hands, as a teſtimony of my gratitude, and deep ſenſe of the many obligations you have put me under. That the bleſſings of the Spirit may accompany theſe diſcourſes to your ſouls, afford you ſome aſſiſtance in your laſt and difficult work at death with a becoming cheerfulneſs, ſaying in that hour, can I not ſee God till this fleſh be laid aſide in the grave; muſt I die before I can live like myſelf? then die, my body, and go to thy duſt, that I may be with Chriſt. With this deſign, and with theſe hearty wiſhes, dear and honoured couſin and worthy friends, I put theſe diſcourſes into your hands, and remain

Your moſt obliged

Kinſman and Servant,

JOHN FLAVEL.

THE

THE PREFACE.

AMONG many other rich endowments beſtowed by the Creator's bounty upon the Soul of Man, the impreſſions of the world to come, and an ability of reflection are peculiar, invaluable, and heavenly gifts. By the former, we have a very great evidence of our own immortality, and deſignation for nobler employments and enjoyments than this embodied ſtate admits; and by the latter, we may diſcern the agreeableneſs or diſagreeableneſs of our hearts, and therein the validity of our title to that expected bleſſedneſs.

But theſe heavenly gifts are neglected and abuſed all the world over. Degenerate ſouls are every where fallen into ſo deep an oblivion of their excellent original, ſpiritual and immortal nature, and alliance to the Father of ſpirits, that (to uſe the upbraiding expreſſion of a great philoſopher) 'they ſeem to be buried in their bodies as ſo many ſilly worms that lurk in their holes, and are loth to peep forth and look abroad. So powerfully do the cares and pleaſures of this world charm all (except a ſmall remnant of regenerate ſouls) that nothing but ſome ſmart ſtrokes of calamity, or the terrible meſſengers of death, can ſtartle them; (and even theſe are not always able to do it) and when they do, all the effect is but a tranſient glance

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at another and unwilling ſhrug to leave this world, and ſo to ſleep again: and thus the impreſſions and ſentiments of the world to come, (which are the natural growth and offſpring of the ſoul) are either ſtifled and ſuppreſt, as in atheiſts; or borne down by impetuous maſterly luſts, as in ſenſualiſts.

And for its ſelf-reflecting property, it ſeems in many to be a power received in vain. It is with moſt ſouls as it is with the eye, which ſees not itſelf, though it ſees all other objects. There be thoſe that have almoſt finiſhed the courſe of a long life (wherein a great part of their time hath lain upon their hands as a cheap and uſeleſs commodity, which they knew not what to do with) who yet never ſpent one ſolemn entire hour in diſcourſe with their own ſouls. What ſerious heart doth not melt into compaſſion over the deluded multitude, who are mocked with dreams, and perpetually buſied about trifles? Who are (after ſo many fruſtrated attempts both of their own, and all paſt ages) eagerly purſuing the fleeing ſhadows; who torture and rack their brains to find out the natures and qualities of birds, beaſts, and plants; indeed any thing rather than their own ſouls, which are certainly the moſt excellent creatures that inhabit this world. They know the true value and worth of other things, but are not able to eſtimate the dignity of that high-born ſpirit which is within them. A ſpirit which (without the addition of any more natural faculties or powers, if thoſe it hath be but ſanctified and devoted to God) is capable of the higheſt perfections and fruitions, even complete conformity to God, the ſatisfying viſions of him for ever. They herd themſelves with beaſts, who are capable of an equality with angels. O what compaſſionate tears muſt ſuch a conſideration as this draw from the eyes of all that underſtand the worth of ſouls!

It hath been my ſin, and is now the matter of my ſorrow, that whilſt myriads of ſouls (of no higher original than mine) are ſome of them beholding the higheſt Majeſty in heaven, and others giving all diligence to make ſure their ſalvation on earth, I was carried away ſo many

years

years in the courſe of this world, (like a drop with the current of the tide) wholly forgetting my invaluable ſoul; whilſt I prodigally waſted the ſtores of my time and thoughts upon vanities, that long ſince paſſed away as the waters which are remembered no more. It ſhall be no ſhame to me to confeſs this folly, ſince the matter of my confeſſion ſhall go to the glory of my God. I ſtudied to know many other things, but I knew not myſelf. It was with me as with a ſervant to whom the maſter commits two things, viz. the child and the child's cloaths; the ſervant is very careful of the cloaths, waſhes and bruſhes, ſtarches and ſteels them, and keeps them ſafe and clean; but the child is forgotten and loſt. My body, which is but the garment of my ſoul, I kept and nouriſhed with exceſſive care; but my ſoul was long forgotten, and had been loſt for ever, as others daily are, had not God rouſed it by the convictions of his Spirit out of that deep oblivion and deadly ſlumber.

When the God that formed it, out of free grace to the work of his own hands, had thus recovered it to a ſenſe of its own worth and danger, my next work was, to get it united with Chriſt, and thereby ſecured from wrath to come; which I found to be a work of difficulty to effect, (if it be yet effected) and a work of time to clear, though but to the degree of good hope through grace.

And ſince the hopes and evidences of ſalvation began to ſpring up in my ſoul, and ſettle the ſtate thereof, I found theſe three were great words, Chriſt, Soul, and Eternity, to have a far different and more awful ſound in my ear than ever they uſed to have. I looked on them from that time, as things of greateſt certainty, and moſt awful ſolemnity. Theſe things have lain with ſome weight upon my thoughts, and I have felt, at certain ſeaſons, a ſtrong inclination to ſequeſter myſelf from all other ſtudies, and ſpend my laſt days, and moſt fixed meditations, upon theſe three great and weighty ſubjects.

I know the ſubject matter of ſtudies and inquiries (be it never ſo weighty) doth not therefore make my meditations and diſcourſes upon it great and weighty; nor am I

ſuch a vain opinionator as to imagine my diſcourſes every way ſuitable to the dignity of ſuch ſubjects: No, the more I think and ſtudy about them, the more I diſcern the indiſtinctneſs, darkneſs, crudity, and confuſion of my own conceptions and expreſſions of ſuch great and tranſcendent things as theſe: but I reſolved to do what I could; and accordingly ſome years paſt I finiſhed and publiſhed in two parts the Doctrines of Chriſt; and by the acceptation and ſucceſs the Lord gave that, he hath encouraged me to go on in this ſecond part of my work, how unequal ſoever my ſhoulders are to the burden of it.

The nature, original, immortality, and capacity of my own ſoul, for the preſent lodged in, and related to this vile body, deſtinated to corruption; together with its exiſtence, employment, perfection, converſe with God and other ſpirits, both of its own, and of a ſuperior rank and order, when it ſhall (as I know it ſhortly muſt) put off this its tabernacle: theſe things have a long time been the matters of my limited deſires to underſtand, ſo far as I could ſee the pillar of fire (God in his word) enlightening my way to the knowledge of them. Yea, ſuch is the value I have for them, that I have given them the next place in my eſteem, to the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and my intereſt in him.

God hath formed me (as he hath other men) a proſpecting creature. I feel myſelf yet uncentered, and ſhort of that ſtate of reſt and ſatisfaction to which my ſoul in its natural and ſpiritual capacity hath a deſignation. I find that I am in a continual motion towards my everlaſting abode; and the expence of my time, and many infirmities tell me I am not far from it: by all which I am ſtrongly prompted to look forward, and acquaint myſelf as much as I can with my next place, ſtate, and employment. I look with an inquiſitive eye in that way.

Yet would I not be guilty of an unwarrantable curioſity, in ſearching into unrevealed things, how willing ſoever I am to put up my head by faith into the world above, and to know the things which Jeſus Chriſt hath purchaſed and prepared for me, and all the reſt that are

waiting

waiting for his appearance and kingdom. I feel my curioſity checked and repreſſed by that elegant paronomaſia, Rom. xii. 3. Μὴ ὑπεραφρονεῖν παρ' ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν, ἀλλὰ φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, 'In all things I would be wiſe unto ſobriety.' I groan under the effects of Adam's itching ambition to know, and would not by repeating his ſin increaſe my own miſery: nor yet would I be ſcared by his example into the contrary evil of neglecting the means God hath afforded me, to know all that I can know of his revealed will.

The helps philoſophy affords in ſome parts of this diſcourſe, are too great to be deſpiſed, and too ſmall to be admired. (c) I confeſs I read the definitions of the ſoul given by the ancient philoſophers, with a compaſſionate ſmile. When Thales calls it a nature without repoſe; Aſclepiades, an exercitation of ſenſe; Heſiod, a thing compoſed of earth and water; Parmenides, a thing compoſed of earth and fire; Galen, ſaith it is heat; Hippocrates, a ſpirit diffuſed throughout the body; Plato, a ſelf-moving ſubſtance; Ariſtotle calls it, Entelechia, that by which the body is moved: if my opinion ſhould be aſked, which of all theſe definitions I like beſt? I ſhould give the ſame anſwer which Theocritus gave to an ill poet, repeating many of his verſes, and aſking which he liked beſt, thoſe (ſaid he) which you have omitted. Or if they muſt have the garland at the prize they have ſhot for, let them have it upon the ſame reaſon that was once given to him that always ſhot wide, *difficilius eſt toties non attingere*, becauſe it was the greateſt difficulty to aim ſo often to the mark, and never come near it. One word of God gives me more light than a thouſand ſuch laborious trifles. As Cæſar was beſt able to write his own commentaries, ſo God only can give the beſt account of this his own creature, on which he hath impreſſed his own image.

(c) For to whom is the truth known with certainty without God? And how can God be known without Chriſt? Or Chriſt explored without the Spirit? Or the Spirit vouchſafed without faith? [TERTULLIAN on the Soul.]

Mo-

Modern philoſophers, aſſiſted by the divine oracles, muſt needs come cloſer to the mark, and give us a far better account of the nature of the ſoul; yet I have endeavoured not to cloud this ſubject with their controverſies or abſtruſe notions; remembering what a ſmart, but deſerved check Tertullian gives thoſe, *qui Platonicum & Ariſtotelicum Chriſtianiſmus procudunt Chriſtianis.* Words are but the ſervants of matter. I value them as merchants do their ſhips, not by the gilded head and ſtern, the neatneſs of their mould, or curious flags and ſtreamers, but by the ſoundneſs of their bottoms, largeneſs of their capacity, and richneſs of their cargo and loading. The quality of this ſubject neceſſitates in many places the uſe of ſcholaſtic terms, which will be obſcure to the vulgar reader; but apt and proper words muſt not be rejected for their obſcurity, except plainer words could be found that fit the ſubject as well, and are as fully expreſſive of the matter. The unneceſſary I have avoided, and the reſt explained as I could.

The principal fruits I eſpecially aim at, both to my own and the reader's ſoul, are, that whilſt we contemplate the freedom, pleaſure, and ſatisfaction of that ſpiritual, incorporeal people, who dwell in the region of light and joy, and are hereby forming to ourſelves a true ſcriptural idea of the bleſſed ſtate of thoſe diſembodied ſpirits with whom we are to ſerve and converſe in the temple worſhip in heaven; and come more explicitly and diſtinctly to underſtand the conſtitution, order, and delightful employment of thoſe our everlaſting aſſociates; we may anſwerably feel the fond and inordinate love of this animal life ſubdued; the frightful maſk of death drop off and a more pleaſing aſpect appear; that no upright ſoul that ſhall read theſe diſcourſes may henceforth be convulſed by the name of death, but cheerfully aſpire, and with a pleaſant expectation wait for the bleſſed ſeaſon of its tranſportation to that bleſſed aſſembly. It is certainly our ignorance of the life of heaven, that makes us dote as we do upon the preſent. There is a gloom, a thick miſt overſpreading the next life, and hiding even from the

eyes

eyes of believers, the glory that is there. We ſend forth our thoughts to penetrate this cloud, but they return to us without the deſired ſucceſs: we reinforce them with a ſally of new and more vigorous thoughts, but ſtill they come back in confuſion and diſappointment, as to any perfect account they can bring us from thence; though the oftener and cloſer we think, ſtill the more we grow up into acquaintance with theſe excellent things.

Another benefit I pray for, and expect from theſe labours, is, that by deſcribing the horrid ſtate of thoſe ſouls which go the other way, and ſhewing to the living the diſmal condition of ſouls departed in their unregenerate ſtate, ſome may be awakened to a ſeaſonable and effectual conſideration of their wretched condition, whilſt yet they continue under the means and among the inſtruments of their ſalvation.

Whatever the fruit of this diſcourſe ſhall be to others, I ſhall have cauſe to bleſs God for the advantages it hath already given me. I begin to find more than ever I have done, in the ſeparate ſtate of ſanctified ſouls, all that is capable of attracting an intellectual nature: and if God will but fix my mind upon this ſtate, and cauſe pleaſed thoughts about it to ſettle into a ſteady frame and temper, I hope I ſhall daily more and more depreciate and deſpiſe this common way of exiſtence in a corporeal priſon; and when the bleſſed ſeaſon of my departure is at hand, I ſhall take a cheerful farewel of the greater and leſſer world, to which my ſoul hath been confined, and have an abundant entrance, through the broad gate of aſſurance, unto the bleſſed unbodied inhabitants of the world to come.

SYLLABUS

SYLLABUS

OF THE

FOLLOWING TREATISE.

The Soul of Man conſidered in this Treatiſe two ways.
Firſt, In the State of Compoſition.
Secondly, In the State of Separation.

A view of the Soul in the ſtate of compoſition, in ſix particulars.

I. In its general nature, a ſubſtance, proved to be ſo.
1. By its creation.
2. By its ſingle exiſtence.
3. By its ſuſtentation of the body.
4. By the ſubjecting of habits and affections in it.

II. In its eſſential properties, which are ſix:
1. It is a vital ſubſtance, whoſe life is not from itſelf, but
(1.) It receives it from God.
(2.) Communicates it to the body.
2. An immortal ſubſtance, proved by eight arguments;
(1.) The ſimplicity of its nature.
(2.) The truth of God in his promiſes and threats.
(3.) The conſent of all nations.
(4.) Its everlaſting habits, which are inſeparable.
(5.) The peculiar dignity of man.
(6.) His deſires of immortality.
(7.) Its returns after death.
(8.) The abſurdities clogging the negative.

3. En-

3. Endued with underſtanding, to which belong,
   (1.) Thoughts to the ſpeculative.
   (2.) Conſcience to the practical underſtanding.
4. And a will, which glorieth in,
   (1.) Its liberty, and
   (2.) Its dominions, both deſpotical and political.
   Yet both reſtrained in ſome particulars;
   (1.) As to the body.
   (2.) As to the thoughts.
   (3.) As to the conſcience.
5. Affections and paſſions, where is ſhewed,
   (1.) Their riſe in the ſoul.
   (2.) Their uſe to the ſoul.
6. Its inclination to the body, which diſtinguiſh it from other ſpirits.

III. Its excellent original, about which we have,
   1. Errors refuted, that it was not,
      (1.) By ſeminal traduction.
      (2.) By angelical procreation.
      (3.) By coætaneous creation.
   2. Its true original aſſerted, by immediate creation.
   3. Objections againſt this aſſertion anſwered.

IV. Its union with the body, *viz.*
   1. That God infuſed it, yet infuſed not ſin into it.
   2. Knit it to the body by our breath, about which four things are opened;
      (1.) What breath is.
      (2.) Its inſtruments.
      (3.) Its feebleneſs.
      (4.) Its improvements.

V. Its love to the body,
   1. In the Evidences of it,
      (1.) Its cares about it.
      (2.) Fears of it.
      (3.) Sympathy with it.
      (4.) Reluctancies at death.
      (5.) Inclinations to re-union.

2. In the Cauſes of it.
   (1.) Propriety in it as its inſtrument of pleaſure and of ſervice.
   (2.) Agreeing with it as its ancient companion.
   (3.) Partnerſhip, both in redemption, and in glory.

VI. The neceſſity of its ſeparation, grounded upon,
1. The law of God, whoſe equity is cleared, with reſpect to,
   (1.) The godly.
   (2.) The ungodly.
2. The providence of God moulding our frame ſuitably to the law of our mortality.

A view of the ſoul as ſeparated, conſidered three ways.

Firſt, In its general nature as a ſoul ſeparated, four ways, *viz.*

I. The nature of ſeparation, and that,
1. Both Mental and intellectual, with the uſefulneſs of it.
2. Real and phyſical; and that either,
   (1.) *In fieri*, its foregoing pains.
   (2.) *In facto eſſe*, its dividing ſtroke.

II. The notices and ſigns of approaching death, where,
1. The reaſons againſt it are weighed.
2. The evidences for it are produced.

III. The changes made by ſeparation, both upon,
1. The body viſibly.
2. The ſoul more conſiderably in ſeveral reſpects.

IV. The ſoul's ability both to exiſt and act when ſeparate, proved,
1. By its underſtanding ſome things without phantaſms, or help of the body.
2. The abſurdities of the contrary hypotheſis.

Secondly, As a ſoul in Chriſt, in eight particulars:

I. The proper ſeaſon of its ſeparation, which is not,
1. Till the work of ſanctification be wrought out upon it.

2. Till

2. Till the whole work of obedience be finiſhed by it.
3. And then it goes with all its graces and comforts with it.

II. The miniſtry of angels at the time of ſeparation.
1. Not out of pure neceſſity, as though it could not aſcend to God without them;
2. But to grace and adorn that day.

III. Their reſidence after death opened, both,
1. Negatively.
(1.) They wander not up and down the world.
(2.) They abide not about our graves.
(3.) They are not detained in purgatory.
(4.) They fall not into a ſwoon, or ſleep.
2. Poſitively, they aſcend to God immediately; for,
(1.) Heaven is ready for them.
(2.) They are ready for it.
(3.) Scriptures are for it.
(4.) Nothing in reaſon againſt it.

IV. The life of holy ſeparate ſouls, in reſpect of,
1. Their pleaſure, which tranſcends,
(1.) All the ſenſitive pleaſure here.
(2.) All the intellectual pleaſure here.
(3.) All the ſpiritual pleaſure here.
2. Knowledge, which is,
(1.) More perfect in degree.
(2.) More eaſy in its acquiſition.
3. Communion with God, which,
(1.) Excels that here in ten reſpects.
(2.) Admits a double change.

V. The idea of a ſoul in glory.

VI. The apparitions of departed ſouls, where,
1. The arguments for it are produced.
2. Conceſſions about it laid down.
3. Reaſons againſt it urged, and objections anſwered.

VII. The diſcourſe and ſpeech of the ſpirits of the juſt.
1. That they do converſe in heaven.
2. Yet without words or ſound.

3. By act of the will, which is,
   (1.) More clear.
   (2.) More quick.

VIII. Their desires of re-union, where,
1. The reasons against it are weighed.
2. The arguments proving it, produced.

Thirdly, As a damned soul, in two things:

I. The idea or representation of a damned soul in respect of,
1. The place where,
2. The misery what,
3. The instrument, and
4. The aggravations of its torments.

II. The various methods of destroying precious souls.
1. By Satan.
2. By men.
3. By themselves.

The only season of salvation noted and pressed upon all,

A TREATISE OF THE SOUL OF MAN.

GENESIS ii. 8.

AND THE LORD GOD FORMED MAN OUT OF THE DUST OF THE GROUND, AND BREATHED INTO HIS NOSTRILS THE BREATH OF LIFE; AND MAN BECAME A LIVING SOUL.

"THREE things (ſaith Athanaſius) are unknown to men according to their eſſence, viz. God, angels, and their own ſouls." Of the nature of the divine and high-born ſoul, we may ſay, as the learned Whitaker doth of the way of its infection by original ſin, "It is eaſier ſought than underſtood, and better underſtood than explained:" and for its original, the moſt ſagacious and renowned for wiſdom amongſt the (A) ancient philoſophers, underſtood nothing of it. It is ſaid of Democritus, that there is "nothing in the whole workmanſhip of nature of which he did not write;" and in a more lofty and ſwelling hyperbole, they ſtile their eagle-eyed Ariſtotle "the rule and miracle of nature; learning itſelf the very ſun of knowledge:"

(A) Plato doubted, Ariſtotle denied, and Galen derided the doctrine of the world's creation.

knowledge:" yet both theſe are not only ſaid, but proved by Lactantius to be learned idiots. How have the ſchools of Epicurus and Ariſtotle, the Carteſians, and other ſects of philoſophers, abuſed and troubled the world with a kind of philoſophical enthuſiaſm, and a great many ridiculous fancies about the original of the ſoul of man? and when all is done, three words of God by the pen of his inſpired Moſes, enlightens us more than all their ſubtil notions of the accidental concretion of atoms, their *materia ſubtilis*, and *anima mundi*, and the reſt of their unintelligible fancies could ever do.—Philoſophy ſought truth, but theology found it. *Jo. Picus Mirand.*

The account Moſes gives us in the context of the origin of the world, and of man, the epitome of it, is full of ſenſe, reaſon, congruity, and clearneſs; and ſuch as renders all the eſſays of all the heathen philoſophers to be vain, inevident, ſelf-repugnant, and inexplicable theories. The inſpired penman gives us in this context a compendious narrative of the world's creation, relating more generally the rude, inform, indigeſted chaos; and then more particularly the ſpecificating and diverſifying of the various beautiful beings, thence educed by the motion of the Spirit of God upon the face of the waters.—When the firſt matter was (ſtrictly) created out of nothing, the Spirit (as Moſes excellently expreſſes it, chap. i. ver. 2.) hovered, or moved over it as a bird over her eggs, and as it were by way of incubation cheriſhing and influencing it, did thereby draw forth all the creatures into their ſeveral forms, and diſtinct particular natures, wherein we now with delight and admiration behold them.

In this manner and order was the ſtately fabric of the world produced and erected; but as yet it remained as a fair and well-furniſhed houſe without an inhabitant. God had employed infinite wiſdom and power about it, and engraven his name upon the meaneſt creature in it: but there was no creature yet made (except angels, the inhabitants of another city) to read the name, and celebrate the praiſes of the Almighty Creator. He therefore thought

thought the world imperfect till there was a creature made to contemplate, praiſe and worſhip the Maker of it: for this very uſe and purpoſe was man created, not only to ſee, but conſider the things he ſaw; diſcourſe, and rationally collect out of them the things he ſaw not; and both praiſe and love the Maker for, and in them all.

The palaces of princes are not beautified and adorned, to the intent men ſhould pay their reſpects and honours to the walls; but to ſhew the grandeur and magnificence of the king, to whoſe perſon their honour is due. The world is a glorious and magnificent pile, raiſed deſignedly to exhibit the wiſdom and power of its Creator, to his reaſonable creature man; that from him God might receive the glory of all his other works. Of this creature man, the maſter-piece of all the viſible world, and therefore crowned king over it, the firſt moment he was made, [Pſal. viii. 5.] Moſes in the next place gives us the account, both of his original whence he came, and of his dignity what he is. 'The Lord God formed man out of 'the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils 'the breath of life; and man became a living ſoul.'— Where we find the original, 1ſt. of the body, 2d. of the ſoul of man.

I. The original of the body of man: 'formed out of 'the duſt of the ground.' Duſt was its original matter; of duſt it was made, and into duſt it muſt be reſolved, [Gen. iii. 19.] The conſideration is humbling, and ſerves to tame the pride of man, who is apt to dote upon his own beauty. Man's body was not made of heavenly matter, as the radiant ſun, and ſparkling ſtars: no, nor yet of the precious and orient earthly matter; God did not melt down the pure and ſplendid gold and ſilver, or powder the precious pearls and ſparkling diamonds; but he formed it of deſpicable duſt.

We find that the ſprinkling of duſt upon new writing prevents many a foul blot: I am ſure the ſprinkling of our original duſt upon our minds by ſerious conſideration, is the way to prevent many a proud boaſt. However, the baſeneſs of the matter and coarſeneſs of the

ſtuff

ſtuff ſerve to ſet off the admirable ſkill of the moſt wiſe and powerful Architect; who out of ſuch deſpicable materials has faſhioned ſo exact and elegant a piece. 'The Lord God formed man out of the duſt.'

The Lord God.—The name of God is here ſet down at full, to ſet forth the dignity of man, the ſubject matter wrought upon, as ſome conceive.

Formed.—Faſhioned, or curiouſly moulded, and figured it. The Hebrew verb primarily ſignifies to preſs, compreſs or ſqueeze together, and by a metalepſis, by preſſing and compreſſing, to mould or faſhion, as the potter doth his clay. The Pſalmiſt uſeth another word to expreſs the artificial elegancy of the body of man, [Pſal. cxxxix. 15, 16.] רקמתי *acupictus ſum*, I am embroidered, painted, or flouriſhed as with a needle: we render it curiouſly wrought. Whatſoever beauty and comely proportion God hath beſtowed by creation upon it, it is all anſwerable to that excellent idea, or model, before conceived in his mind and purpoſe. All this care and coſt was beſtowed upon the body of man; which, when all is done, is but the caſe in which that ineſtimable jewel the ſoul, was to be lodged. This therefore I muſt lay aſide, and come to the more noble ſubject.

II. The Soul of Man,—about which we have before us four things to ponder in this text, viz. 1. The nature and property of it.—2. Its deſcent and original.—3. The manner of infuſion into,—4. And the bond that unites it with the body.

(1.) The nature and property of it, a living ſoul. The word נפש, as alſo the Chaldee *Napth-ſha*, and the Greek ψυχη, have one and the ſame etymology, all ſignifying to breathe, or reſpire: not that the breath is the ſoul, but denoting the manner of its infuſion by the breath of God, and the means of its continuation in the body, by the breath of our noſtrils. God's breath infuſed it, and our breath continues its union with the body.

The epithet חיה, which we tranſlate *living*, the Arabic renders *a rational ſoul*; and indeed none but a rational deſerves the name of a living ſoul. For all other forms or

ſouls,

ſouls, which are of an earthly extract, do both depend on, and die with the matter out of which they were educed: but this being of another nature, a ſpiritual and ſubſtantial being, is therefore rightly ſtiled a living ſoul.

The Chaldee renders it a *ſpeaking ſoul.* And indeed it deſerves a remark, that the ability of ſpeech is conferred on no other ſoul but man's. Other creatures have apt and excellent organs; birds can modulate the air, and form it into ſweet and charming ſounds; but no creature except man, whoſe ſoul is of an heavenly extraction, can articulate the ſound, and form it into words, by which the notions and ſentiments of one ſoul are conveyed to the underſtanding of another. We render it therefore a living, a rational, or a ſpeaking ſoul, which diſtinguiſhes the ſoul of man from all others.

(2.) We find here the beſt account that ever was given of the origin of the ſoul of man. O what a duſt and pother have the diſputes and conteſts of philoſophers raiſed about this matter! which is cleared in a few words in this ſcripture; 'God breathed into his noſtrils the 'breath of life, and man became a living ſoul;' which plainly ſpeaks it to be the immediate effect of God's creating power. Not a reſult from matter; no, no reſults flow out of the boſom of matter, but this comes from the inſpiration of God. That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh; but this is a ſpirit deſcending from the Father of Spirits. God formed it, but not out of any pre-exiſtent matter, whether celeſtial or terreſtrial; much leſs out of himſelf, as the Stoics ſpeak; but out of nothing.—An high-born creature it is, but no particle of the Deity. The indiviſible and immutable eſſence of God is utterly repugnant to ſuch notions; and therefore they ſpeak not ſtrictly and warily enough, that are bold to call it a ray, or an emanation from God. A ſpirit it is, and flows by way of creation, immediately from the Father of Spirits; but yet it is a ſpirit of another inferior rank and order.

(3.) We have alſo the account of the way and manner of its infuſion into the body, viz. by the ſame breath of

God which gave it its being. It is therefore a rational, ſcriptural, and juſtifiable expreſſion of S. Auguſtine; "it is infuſed in creating, and created in infuſing:" though Dr. Brown too ſlightingly calls it a mere rhetorical antimetatheſis. Some of the fathers, as Juſtin, Ireneus, and Tertullian, were of opinion, that the Son of God aſſumed a humane ſhape at this time, in which he afterwards often appeared to the fathers, as a prelude to his true and real incarnation; and took duſt or clay into his hands, out of which he formed the body of man, according to the pattern of that body in which he appeared: and that being done, he afterwards, by breathing, infuſed the ſoul into it. But I rather think it is an anthropopathy, or uſual figure in ſpeech, by which the Spirit of God ſtoops to the imbecility of our underſtanding. 'He breathed 'into his noſtrils the breath of life;' Heb. *lifes*. But this plural word חיים notes rather the twofold life of man in this world, and in that to come; or the ſeveral faculties and powers belonging to one and the ſame ſoul, viz. the intellectual, ſenſual, and vegetative offices thereof; than that there are more ſouls than one, eſſentially differing, in one and the ſame man; for that, as Aquinas truly ſaith, is impoſſible. We cannot trace the way of the ſpirit, or tell in what manner it was united with this clod of earth. But it is enough that he who formed it, did alſo unite or marry it to the body. This is clear, it came not by way of natural reſultancy from the body, but by way of inſpiration from the Lord; not from the warm boſom of the matter, but from the breath of its Maker.

(4.) Laſtly, we have here the tie or band by which it is united with the body of man, viz. the breath of his (*i. e.*) man's noſtrils. It is a moſt aſtoniſhing myſtery to ſee heaven and earth married together in one perſon; the duſt of the ground and an immortal ſpirit claſping each other with ſuch dear embraces and tender love; ſuch a noble and divine gueſt, to take up its reſidence within the mud walls of fleſh and blood. Alas! how little affinity,

affinity, and yet what dear affection is found betwixt them.

Now that which ſo ſweetly links theſe two different natures together, and holds them in union, is nothing elſe but the breath of our noſtrils, as the text ſpeaks: it came in with the breath: whilſt breath ſtays with us, it cannot go from us; and as ſoon as the breath departs, it departs alſo. All the rich elixirs and cordials in the world cannot perſuade it to ſtay one minute after the breath is gone. One puff of breath will carry away the wiſeſt, holieſt, and moſt deſireable ſoul that ever dwelt in fleſh and blood. When our breath is corrupt, our days are extinct, [Job xvii. 1.] 'Thou takeſt away their 'breath, they die and return to their duſt,' [Pſal. civ. 29.]

Out of the text thus opened ariſe two doctrinal propoſitions, which I ſhall inſiſt upon, viz.

Doct. 1. That the Soul of man is of divine original, created and inſpired immediately by the Lord.

Doct. 2. That the ſouls and bodies of men are linkt or knit together by the feeble hand of the breath of their noſtrils.

In the proſecution of theſe two propoſitions many things will come to our hands, of great uſe in religion: which I ſhall labour to lay clearly and orderly in the reader's underſtanding, and preſs as warmly upon his heart as I can.

Doct. 1. That the ſoul of man is of divine original, created and inſpired immediately by the Lord.

In this firſt propoſition two things are to be diſtinctly pondered, viz. 1. The nature, and, 2. The original of the ſoul; or what it is, and from whence it came.

1. The firſt thing which arreſts our thoughts, is the nature of the ſoul, or what kind of being it is.

Thoſe that are moſt curiouſly inquiſitive into all other beings, and put nature upon the rack to make her confeſs her ſecrets, are in the mean time found ſhamefully negligent in the ſtudy of themſelves. Few, very few there are that can prevail with themſelves to ſit down and

think cloſe to ſuch queſtions as theſe viz. What manner of being is this ſoul of mine? whence came it? why was it infuſed into this body? and where muſt it abide when death hath diſlodged it out of this frail tabernacle? There is a mutual averſation in man to ſuch exerciſes of thoughts as theſe, although in this world, a more noble or intellectual creature is not to be found. The ſoul is a moſt wonderful and aſtoniſhing piece of divine workmanſhip; it is no hyperbole to call it the breath of God, the beauty of man, the wonder of angels, and the envy of devils. One ſoul is of more value than all the bodies in the world. The nature of it is ſo ſpiritual and ſublime, that it cannot be perfectly known by the moſt acute and penetrating underſtanding, aſſiſted in the ſearch by all the aids philoſophy can contribute.

It is not my deſign in this diſcourſe to treat of the ſeveral faculties and powers of the ſoul, or to give you the riſe, natures, or numbers of its affections and paſſions; but I ſhall confine my diſcourſe to its general nature, and original. And ſeeing none can ſo well diſcover the nature of it, as he who is its author, I therefore juſtly expect the beſt light from his word, though I will not neglect any other aid he is pleaſed elſewhere to afford.—The ſoul is variouſly denominated from its ſeveral powers and offices, as the ſea from the ſeveral ſhoars it waſhes. I will not ſpend time about the ſeveral names by which it is known to us in ſcripture, but give you that deſcription of it, with which my underſtanding is moſt ſatisfied, which take thus:—The ſoul of man is a vital, ſpiritual, and immortal ſubſtance, endowed with an underſtanding, will, and various affections; created with an inclination to the body, and infuſed thereinto by the Lord.

In this deſcription we have the two general parts into which I diſtributed this diſcourſe; viz. its general nature, and divine original. The nature of the ſoul is expreſſed to us in theſe following terms:

1. It is a ſubſtance.

That,

That is to ſay, not a quality, or an accident inhering in another being or ſubject, as whiteneſs doth in the ſnow; but a being by itſelf. Qualities and accidents have no exiſtence of their own, but require another being or ſubject to their exiſtence; but the ſoul of man is a ſubſtantial being of itſelf, which will evidently appear upon the following grounds

(1.) Becauſe it is in a ſtrict and proper ſenſe created by God, he formeth or createth the ſpirit in man, [Zech. xii. 1.] To him we are adviſed to commit it, as to a faithful Creator, [I. Pet. iv. 19.] The ſubſtantial nature of the ſoul is implied in the very notions of its creation; (B) for whatſoever is created is a ſubſtahce, accidents are not ſaid to be created, but concreated; the craſis of humours and reſults of matter are not ſubſtances created, but things riſing in a natural way from created ſubſtances. They flow from, and, as to their very eſſence, depend upon pre-exiſtent matter: but the ſoul was created out of nothing, and infuſed into the body after it was formed, and organiſed; which evidenceth its ſubſtantial nature.

(2.) This evidenceth the ſoul to be a ſubſtance, that it can and doth exiſt and ſubſiſt by itſelf alone, when ſeparated from the body by death. [Luke xxiii. 43.] 'To 'day ſhalt thou (i. e. thy ſoul) be with me in paradiſe;' and [Mat. x. 28.] 'Fear not them that kill the body, but 'are not able to kill the ſoul.' Were the ſoul but an accident, a quality, a reſult, he that kills the body muſt needs kill the ſoul too; as he that caſts a ſnow ball into the fire, muſt needs deſtroy the whiteneſs with the ſnow; accidents fail and periſh with their ſubject: but ſeeing it is plain in theſe and many other ſcriptures, the ſoul doth not fail with the body; nothing can be more plain and evident, than that it is of a ſubſtantial nature. When the Spaniards came firſt among the poor Indians, they thought

(B) He breathed the breath of life into man to ſhow that his ſoul is from an external cauſe by creation, and that at his creation it is infuſed into the body. [POL. Synopſ. in loc.]

the

the horſe and his rider to be one creature; as many think the ſoul and body of man to be nothing but breath and body; whereas indeed they are two diſtinct creatures, as vaſtly different in their natures, as the rider and his horſe, or the bird and his cage. While the man is on horſeback, he moves according to the motion of the horſe; and whilſt the bird is incaged, he eats, and drinks, and ſleeps, and hops, and ſings in it. But if the horſe fail and die under his rider, or the cage be broken, the man can go on his own feet; and the bird enjoy himſelf in the open fields and woods, neither depend as to being or action, on the horſe or cage.

(3.) Both ſcripture and philoſophy conſent in this, that the ſoul is the chief, moſt noble, and principal part of man, from which the whole man is, and ought to be denominated. So Gen. xlvi. 26. 'All the ſouls that came 'with Jacob into Egypt. *i. e.* all the perſons.' The apoſtle in II. Cor v. 8. ſeems to exclude the body from the notion of perſonality, when he ſaith, 'We are 'willing rather to be abſent from the body, and to be 'preſent with the Lord:' that we, a term of perſonality, is there given to the ſoul excluſively of the body; for the body cannot be abſent from itſelf: but we, that is, the ſouls of believers, may be both abſent from it, and preſent with Chriſt. To this we may add II. Cor. iv. 16. where the ſoul is called the man, and the inner man too, the body being but the external face or ſhadow of the man. And to this philoſophy agrees. The beſt philoſophers are ſo far from thinking that the body is the ſubſtantial part of man, and the ſoul a thing dependent on it, that contrarily they affirm that the body depends upon the ſoul, and that it is the ſoul that conſerves and ſuſtains it. If it be ſo far from depending on the body, or being contained within the body, that the body rather depends on it, and is in it, then ſurely the ſoul muſt be what we deſcribe it to be, a ſubſtantial being.

(4.) It is paſt all controverſy, that the ſoul is a ſubſtance, becauſe it is the ſubject of properties, affections, and habits: which is the very ſtrict and formal notion

of

of a ſubſtance. All the affections and paſſions of hope, deſire, love, delight, fear, ſorrow, and the reſt, are all rooted in it, and ſpring out of it; and ſo for habits, arts, and ſciences, it is the ſoul in which they are lodged and ſeated. Having once gotten a promptitude to act, either by ſome ſtrong, or by ſome frequently repeated actings, they abide in the ſoul, even when the acts are intermitted: as in ſleep, a navigator, ſcribe, or muſician are really artiſts, when they are neither ſailing, writing, or playing; becauſe their habits ſtill remain in their minds, as is evident in this, that when they awake, they can perform their ſeveral works, without learning the rules of their art anew.

II. The ſoul is a vital ſubſtance; *i. e.*

A ſubſtance which hath an eſſential principal of life in itſelf. A living, active being. A living ſoul, ſaith Moſes in the text; and hereby it is diſtingniſhed from, and oppoſed to matter or body. The ſoul moves itſelf and the body too; it has a ſelf-moving virtue or power in itſelf, whereas the body is wholly paſſive, and is moved, and acted not by itſelf, but by this vital ſpirit. James. ii. 26. 'The body without the ſpirit is dead.' It acts not at all but as moved by this inviſible ſpirit. This is ſo plain, that it admits of ſenſible proof and demonſtration. Take mere matter, and compound or divide it, alter it and change it how you will, you can never make it ſee, feel, hear, or act vitally without a quickning and actuating ſoul; yet we muſt ſtill remember, that this active, vital principal, the ſoul, though it hath this vital power in itſelf, it hath it not from itſelf but in a conſtant receptive dependence upon God, the firſt cauſe both of its being and power.

III. It is a ſpiritual ſubſtance.

All ſubſtances are not groſs, material, viſible, and palpable ſubſtances, but there are ſpiritual and immaterial, as well as corporeal ſubſtances, diſcernible by ſight or touch. To deny this were to turn a downright Sadducee, and to deny the exiſtence of angels and ſpirits, [Acts xxiii. 8.] The word ſubſtance, as it is applied to the ſoul of man,

man, puzzles and confounds the dark underſtandings of ſome, that know not what to make of an immaterial ſubſtance; whereas in this place it is no more than (c) *ſubſtare accidentibus, i. e.* to be a ſubject in which properties, affections, and habits are ſeated and ſubjected. This is a ſpiritual ſubſtance, and is frequently in ſcripture called a ſpirit; 'Into thy hands I commit my ſpirit,' [Luke xxiii. 6.] 'Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit,' [Acts vii. 59.] and ſo frequently all over the ſcriptures. And the ſpirituality of its nature appears, (1.) By its deſcent in a peculiar way from the Father of Spirits. (2.) In that it rejoiceth in the eſſential properties of a ſpirit. (3.) That at death it returns to that great ſpirit who was its efficient and former.

(1.) It deſcends in a peculiar way from the Father of Spirits, as hath been ſhewn in the opening of this text: God ſtiles himſelf its father, Heb. xii. 9. its former, Zech. xii. 1. It is true, he giveth to all living things, life and breath, Acts xvii. 25. Other ſouls are from him, as well as the rational ſoul; but in a far different way and manner. They flow not immediately from him in creation, as this doth. It is ſaid, 'Let the earth bring 'forth the living creature after his kind, but God created 'man in his own image,' [Gen. i. 24, 27.] Which ſeems plainly to make a ſpecifical difference betwixt the reaſonable and all other ſouls.

(2.) It rejoiceth in the eſſential properties of a ſpirit: for it is an incorporeal ſubſtance, as ſpirits are. It hath not extenſion of parts; nor is it diviſible, as the body is. It hath not dimenſions and figures, as matter hath; but is a moſt pure, inviſible, and (as the acute and judicious Dr. Moore expreſſeth it) an indiſcerptible ſubſtance. It hath the principle of life and motion in itſelf, or rather, it is ſuch a principle itſelf, and is not moved as the dull and ſluggiſh matter is, by another. Its efficacy is great,

(c) A ſubſtance in this uſe of the word, is that which depends not in reſpect to its being upon any other creature, as accidents and qualities do, whoſe being is by having their being in another creature as their ſubject; but thir being, the ſoul, exiſts in itſelf.

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though it be unſeen, and not liable to the teſt of our touch, as no ſpiritual ſubſtances are. A ſpirit, ſaith Chriſt, hath not fleſh and bones, [Luke xxiv. 39.] We both grant and feel that the ſoul hath a love and inclination to the body, (which indeed is no more than it is neceſſary it ſhould have;) yet can we no more infer its corporeity from that love to the body, than we can infer the corporeity of angels from their affection and benevolent love to men. It is a ſpirit of a nature vaſtly different from the body in which it is immerſed. "There is, ſaith Mr. How, no greater myſtery in nature, than the union betwixt the ſoul and body. That a mind and ſpirit ſhould be ſo tied and linked to a clod of clay, that while that remains in a due temper, it cannot by any art or power free itſelf!—What ſo much a-kin are a mind and a piece of earth, a clod and a thought, that they ſhould be thus affixed toone another?" Certainly, the heavenly pure bodies do not differ ſo much from a dunghill, as the ſoul and body differ: they differ but as more pure and leſs pure matter; but theſe, as material and immaterial. If we conſider wherein conſiſts the being of a body, and wherein that of a ſoul, and then compare them, the matter will be clear.

We cannot come to an apprehenſion of their being, but by conſidering their primary paſſions and properties, whereby they make diſcovery of themſelves. The firſt and primary affection of a body is that extenſion of parts whereof it is compounded, and a capacity of diviſion, upon which, as upon the fundamental mode, the particular dimenſions, (that is the figures) and the local motion do depend. Again, for the being of our ſouls, if we reflect upon ourſelves, we ſhall find that all our knowledge of them reſolves into this, that we are beings conſcious to ourſelves of ſeveral kinds of cogitations; that by our outward ſenſes we apprehend bodily things preſent, and by our imagination we apprehend things abſent: and that we oft recover into our apprehenſion things paſt and gone, and upon our perception of things, we findourſelves variouſly affected.

Let theſe two properties of a ſoul and body be compared, and put upon the firſt view of a conſidering mind, it will appear that diviſibility is not apprehenſion, or judgement, or deſire, or diſcourſe: That to cut a body into ſeveral parts, or put it into ſeveral ſhapes, or bring it to ſeveral motions, or mix it after ſeveral ways, will never bring it to apprehend, or deſire. No man can think the combining of fire, and air, and water, and earth, ſhould make the lump of it to know or comprehend what is done to it, or by it. We ſee manifeſtly, that upon the diviſion of the body the ſoul remains entire and undivided. It is not the loſs of a leg, or arm, or eye, that can maim the underſtanding, or the will, or cut off the affections. Nay, it pervades the body it dwells in, (and is whole in the whole, and whole in every part,) which it could never do if itſelf were material. Yea, it comprehends in its underſtanding the body or matter in which it is lodged; and more than that, it can and doth form conceptions of pure ſpiritual and immaterial beings, which have no dimenſions or figures; all which ſhews it to be no corporeal, but a ſpiritual and immaterial ſubſtance.

(3.) As it derives its beings from the Father of ſpirits in a peculiar way, and rejoiceth in its ſpiritual properties; ſo at death it returns to that great ſpirit from whence it came. It is not annihilated or reſolved into ſoft air, or ſucked up again by the element of fire, or catched back again into the ſoul of the world, as ſome have dreamed; but it returns to God who gave it, to give an account of itſelf to him, and receive its judgement from him. Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit ſhall return to God who gave it, [Eccleſ. xii. 7.] Each part of man to its like, duſt to duſt, and ſpirit to ſpirit. Not that the ſoul is reſolved into God, as the body is into earth: but as God created it a rational ſpirit, conſcious to itſelf of moral good and evil; ſo when it hath finiſhed its time in the body, it muſt appear before the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, its arbiter and final judge.

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By all which we ſee that as it is elevated too high on the one hand, when it is made a particle of God himſelf; not only the creature, but a part of God, as Plutarch, and Philo Judæus, and others have termed it: ſo it is degraded too low, when it is affirmed to be matter, though the pureſt, fineſt, and moſt ſubtil in nature; which approacheth neareſt to the nature of a ſpirit. A ſpirit it is, as much as an angel is a ſpirit, though it be a ſpirit of another ſpecies. This is the name it is known by throughout the ſcriptures. In a word, it is void of mixture and compoſition, there are no jarring qualities, compounded elements, or diviſible parts in the ſoul, as there are in bodies; but it is a pure, ſimple, inviſible and indiviſible ſubſtance, which proves its ſpirituality, and brings us to the fourth particular, viz.

IV. It is an immortal ſubſtance.

The ſimplicity and ſpirituality of its nature, of which I ſpake before, plainly ſhews us, that it is in its very nature deſigned for immortality: for ſuch a being or ſubſtance as this hath none of the ſeeds of corruption and death in its nature, as all material and compounded beings have. It hath nothing within it tending to diſſolution: no jarring elements, no contrary qualities are found in ſpirits, as there are in other creatures of a mixed nature. Phyſicians and philoſophers have diſputed and contended eagerly about the true cauſes of natural death; and whilſt they have been contending about the way, they have come to the end. The ingreſs of the ſoul is obſcure, and its egreſs not clear. But this ſeems to be the thing in which they generally center, that the expence and deſtruction of the natural moiſture, or radical balſam, as others call it, which is as the oil that maintains natural heat, or the bridle that reſtrains that flame of life from departing; this is the cauſe of natural death. Others aſſign the unequal reparation of the parts of the body, as the cauſe of death. But be it one or other, it is evident, the ſoul, which conſiſts neither of contrary qualities, nor of diſſimilar parts, muſt be above the reach and ſtroke of death. For if the ſoul die, it muſt be either from ſome ſeeds and

principles of death and corruption within itſelf, or by ſome deſtructive power without itſelf. In itſelf you ſee there is no ſeed or principle of death; and if it be deſtroyed by a power without itſelf, it muſt be either by the ſtroke of ſome creature, or from the hand of God that firſt formed and created it: but the hand and power of no creature can deſtroy it; creature-power reaches no farther than the body, [Matt. x. 28.] 'They cannot kill 'the ſoul.' And though the almighty power of God that created it out of nothing, can as eaſily reduce it to nothing; yet he will never do ſo. For beſides the deſignation for eternity, which is diſcernible in its very nature, and which ſpeaks the intention of God to perpetuate his threatenings of eternal wrath, and promiſes of everlaſting life reſpectively made to the ſouls of men, as they ſhall be found in Chriſt, or out of him, puts it beyond all doubt, that they ſhall never die; as will be more fully evidenced in the following diſcourſe. Well then, I hope ſo far our way is clear in the ſearch of the nature of the ſoul, that it is a ſubſtance, a ſpiritual ſubſtance, and being ſo, it is alſo an immortal ſubſtance. No doubt remains with me as to either of theſe. Let us then proceed to the conſideration of its faculties and powers, by which it may be yet more fully known, and we ſhall find that,

V. It is a vital, ſpiritual, and immortal ſubſtance, endued with an underſtanding.

This is the noble leading faculty of the ſoul: we are not diſtinguiſhed from brutes by our ſenſes, but by our underſtanding. As grace ſets one man above another, ſo underſtanding ſets the meaneſt man above the beſt of brutes. Strange and wonderful things are performed by the natural inſtinct and ſagacity of beaſts; but yet, what is ſaid of one is true of them all, 'God hath not 'imparted underſtanding to them,' [Job xxxix. 17.] This is a jewel which adorns none but rational creatures, men and angels.

It is a faculty of the reaſonable ſoul, by which a man apprehends and judgeth all intelligible things. The ob-

ject

ject of it is every being, ſo far as it is true in itſelf, and apprehenſible by man. It hath a twofold uſe in the life of man, viz.

(1.) To diſtinguiſh truth from error. By this candle of the Lord, lighted up in the ſoul of man, he may diſcern betwixt duty and ſin, good and evil. It is the eye of the ſoul, by which it ſeeth the way in which we ſhould go, and the dangerous precipices that are on either ſide. It is the ſoul's taſter, and diſcerns wholeſome food from baneful poiſon, [Job xii. 11.] 'Doth not the ear (i. e. 'the underſtanding by the ear) try words, as the mouth 'taſteth meat?' It brings all things, as it were, in the lump before it, and then ſorts them, and orderly ranks them into their proper claſſes of lawful and unlawful, neceſſary and indifferent, expedient and inexpedient, that the ſoul may not be injured by miſtaking one for another. And this judgement of diſcretion every man muſt be allowed for himſelf. No man is obliged to ſhut the eyes of his own underſtanding, and follow another man blindfold.

(2.) To direct and guide us in our practice. This faculty is by philoſophers rightly called the leading faculty, becauſe the will follows its practical dictates. It ſits at the helm, and guides the courſe of the ſoul; not impelling or rigorouſly inforcing its dictates upon the will; for the will cannot be ſo impoſed upon; but by giving it a directive light, or pointing as it were with its finger, at what it ought to chuſe, and what to refuſe. To this faculty belong two other excellent and wonderful powers of the ſoul, viz. thoughts and conſcience.

1. The power or ability of cogitation: thoughts are properly the actings and agitations of the mind, or any actual operation of the underſtanding. They are the muſings of the mind, which are acted in the ſpeculative part of the underſtanding. It is obſervable that the Hebrew word *ſuach*, which is uſed for meditation, or thinking, ſignifies both to think and to ſpeak in the mind. When the underſtanding or mind revolves and meditates the things that come into it, that very meditation is an inward

inward ſpeaking, or a hidden word in the heart: [Deut. xv. 9.] 'Beware, leſt there be a thought in thy wicked 'heart,' as ſome render it: In the Hebrew it is *a word in thy heart*; ſo Matt. ix. 3. 4. 'They ſpake within 'themſelves,' i. e. they thought in their hearts, [Matt. xxi. 25.] The objects preſented to the mind are the companions, with whom our hearts talk and converſe.

Thoughts are the figments and creatures of the mind. They are formed within it in multitudes innumerable. The power of cogitation is in the mind, yea, in the ſpirit of the mind. The fancy indeed, whilſt the ſoul is embodied, ordinarily and for the moſt part preſents the appearances and likeneſſes of things to the mind; but yet it can form thoughts of things which the fancy can preſent no image of, as when the ſoul thinks of God, or of itſelf. This power of cogitation goes with the ſoul, and is rooted in it, when it is ſeparated from the body; and by it we ſpeak to God, and converſe with angels, and other ſpirits in the unbodied ſtate, as will be more fully opened in the proceſs of this diſcourſe.

2. The conſcience belongs alſo to this faculty; for it being the judgement of a man upon himſelf, with reſpect or relation to the judgement of God, it muſt needs belong to the underſtanding part or faculty. Thoughts are formed in the ſpeculative, but conſcience belongs to the practical underſtanding. It is a very high and awful power; it is *ſolo Deo minor*, and rides, as Joſeph did, in the ſecond chariot: the next and immediate officer under God. He ſaith of conſcience with reſpect to every man, as he once ſaid of Moſes with reſpect to Pharaoh, 'See, I have made thee a God to Pharaoh,' [Exod. vii. 1.] The voice of conſcience is the voice of God, for it is his vicegerent and repreſentative. 'What it binds on 'earth, is bound in heaven; and what it looſeth on earth, 'is looſed in heaven.' It obſerves, records, and bears witneſs to all our actions, and acquits or condemns us in the name of God for them. Its conſolations are moſt ſweet, and its condemnations moſt terrible; ſo terrible, that ſome have choſen death, which is the king of terrors, rather

rather than to endure the ſcorching heat of their own conſciences. The greateſt deference and obedience is due to its commands. And a man had better endure any rack or torture in the world, than incur the torments of it.—It accompanies us as our ſhadow wherever we go; and when all others forſake us, as at death they will, conſcience is then with us, and is never more active and vigorous than at that time. Nor doth it forſake us after death, but where the ſoul goes, it goes; and will be its companion in the other world for ever. How glad would the damned be, if they might but have left their conſciences behind them when they went hence? But, as Bernard rightly ſays, "It is both witneſs, judge, tormentor and priſon; it accuſeth, judgeth, condemneth and puniſheth."

And thus briefly of the underſtanding, which hath many offices, and as many names from thoſe offices.—It is ſometimes called wit, reaſon, underſtanding, opinion, judgement. And why we beſtow ſo many names upon one and the ſame faculty, the learned author of that ſmall but excellent tract *de Anima*, gives us this true and ingenious account:

"The wit, the pupil of the ſoul's clear eye,
And in man's world the only ſhining ſtar,
Looks in the mirror of the phantaſy,
Where all the gatherings of the ſenſes are.

And after by diſcourſing to and fro,
Anticipating and comparing things,
She doth all univerſal natures know,
And all effects into their cauſes brings.

When ſhe rates things, and moves from ground to ground,
The name of Reaſon ſhe obtains by this;
But when by reaſon ſhe the truth hath found,
And ſtanding fixt, ſhe Underſtanding is.
When her aſſent ſhe lightly doth incline,
To either part ſhe is Opinion light;
But when ſhe doth by principles define
A common truth, ſhe hath true Judgement's ſight.

And

And as from ſenſes, reaſon's work doth ſpring,
So many reaſons underſtanding gain;
And many underſtandings knowledge bring,
And by much knowledge wiſdom we obtain."

VI. God hath endued the ſoul of man not only with an underſtanding to diſcern and direct, but alſo with a will to govern, moderate, and over-rule the actions of life. The will is a faculty of the rational ſoul, whereby a man either chuſeth or refuſeth the things which the underſtanding diſcerns and knows. This is a very high and noble power of the ſoul. The underſtanding ſeems to bear the ſame relation to the will, as a grave counſellor doth to a great prince. It glories in two excellencies, viz. 1. Liberty. 2. Dominion.

(1). It hath freedom and liberty, it cannot be compelled and forced; co-action is repugnant to its very nature. In this it differs from the underſtanding, that the underſtanding is wrought upon neceſſarily, but the will acts ſpontaneouſly. This liberty of the will reſpects the choice or refuſal of the means for attaining thoſe ends it proſecutes, according as it finds them more or leſs conducible thereunto. The liberty of the will muſt be underſtood to be in things natural, which are within its own proper ſphere, not in things ſupernatural. It can move or not move the body as it pleaſes, but it cannot move towards Chriſt in the way of faith as it pleaſeth: it can open or ſhut the hand or eye at its pleaſure, but not the heart. True indeed, it is not compelled or forced to turn to God by ſupernatural grace, but in a way ſuitable to its nature, it is determined and drawn to Chriſt, [Pſal. cx. 3.] It is drawn by a mighty power, and yet runs freely; [Cant. i. 4.] 'Draw me, we will run after 'thee.'

Efficacious grace, and victorious delight, is a thing very different from compulſive force. "Pelagius (ſays Dr. Monton) at firſt gave all to nature, acknowledged no neceſſity of divine grace; but when this proud doctrine found

found little countenance, he called nature by the name of grace; and when that deceit was diſcovered, he acknowledged no other grace but outward inſtruction, or the benefit of external revelation, to diſcourſe and put men in mind of their duty. Being yet driven farther, he acknowledged the grace of pardon; and before a man could do any thing acceptably, there was a neceſſity of the remiſſion of ſin, and then he might obey God perfectly.—But that not ſufficing, he acknowledged another grace, viz. the example of Chriſt, which doth both ſecure our rule, and encourage our practice. And laſt of all, his followers owned ſome kind of internal grace, but they made that to conſiſt in ſome illumination of the underſtanding, or moral perſuaſion, by probable arguments, to excite the will, and this not abſolutely neceſſary, but only for facilitation, as an horſe to a journey, which otherwiſe a man might go a-foot. Others grant the ſecret influences of God's grace, but make the will of man a co-ordinate cauſe with God; namely, that God doth propound the object, hold forth inducing conſiderations, give ſome remote power and aſſiſtance; but ſtill there is an indifferency in the will of man, to accept or refuſe, as liketh him beſt." Thus have they been forced to quit and change their ground: but ſtill the pride of nature will not let men ſee the neceſſity of divine efficacious influences upon the will, and the conſiſtency thereof with natural liberty.

2. Its dignity conſiſts in its dominion as well as in its liberty. The will hath an empire and ſcepter belonging to it, yea, a double empire, for its rules: 1. Over the body, by way of abſolute command. 2. Over the other powers and paſſions of the ſoul, by way of ſuaſion.

(1.) The will, like an abſolute ſovereign, reigns over the body (*i. e.* its external members) by way of abſolute command. It ſaith, as the Centurion did, I am in authority, and God hath put the many members of the body in ſubjection to me. I ſay to one, move, and it moves; to another, ſtop, and it ſtops; and to a third, do this, and it doth it. The obſequious members, like ſo many

ſervants, have, as it were, their eyes waiting on the imperial commands of the will, and it is admirable to behold with what diſpatch and ſpeed they execute its commands, as if their obedient motions were rather concomitant, than ſubſequent acts to the will's mandates. Let it but command to have the windows of the body open, or ſhut, and it is done in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And ſo for the reſt of the external ſenſes and members, they pay it moſt ready obedience. Yet when I ſay, the will hath a deſpotical and abſolute ſovereignty over the members, it muſt be underſtood with a double limitation. *Firſt*, They are only at its beck for uſe and ſervice; it can uſe them whilſt well, and rightly diſpoſed; but it cannot perpetuate them, or reſtore them when indiſpoſed. If the ſoul will the health and life of the body never ſo intenſely and vehemently, it cannot keep off death one moment the longer from it. And, *ſecondly*, its ſovereignty no way intrenches upon, nor interferes with the dominion of Providence over the members of the body, and the various motions of them. God hath reſerved a ſovereign negative voice to himſelf, whatever decrees the will paſſes. Jeroboam ſtretches out his hand againſt the man of God to ſmite him, but God puts a *remora* in the very inſtant to the loco-motive faculty, that though he would never ſo fain, he could not pull in his hand again to him; [I. Kings xiii. 4.] The will commands the ſervice of the tongue, and chargeth it to deliver faithfully ſuch or ſuch words, in which, it may be, the ruin of good men may be imported; and when it comes to do its office, the tongue faulters, and, contrary to the command of the will, drops ſome word, that diſcovers and defeats the deſign of the will, according to that in Job xiii. 20. 'He removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty.'

(2.) It hath a political power over the faculties and paſſions of the ſoul, not by way of abſolute command, but by way of ſuaſion and inſinuation. Thus it can oft-times perſuade the underſtanding and thoughts to lay by this or that ſubject, and apply themſelves to the ſtudy of another. It can bridle and reſtrain the affections and paſſions,

paſſions, but yet it hath no abſolute command over the inner, as it hath over the outward man: its weakneſs and inability to govern the inner man appears in two things more eſpecially remarkable, viz. 1. It cannot with all its power and ſkill command and fetch off the thoughts from ſome ſubjects which are ſet on at ſome times with extraordinary weight upon the ſoul. However, the thoughts may obſequiouſly follow its beck at ſometimes, yea, for the moſt part; yet there are caſes and ſeaſons, in which its authority and perſuaſions cannot diſengage one thought; as (1.) when God hath to do with the ſoul in the work of converſion, when he convinceth of ſin and danger, and ſets a man's evils in order before his eyes: theſe are terrible repreſentations, and fain would the carnal will diſengage the thoughts from ſuch ſad ſubjects, and ſtrives by all manner of perſuaſions and diverſions ſo to do; but all to no purpoſe, [Pſal. li. 3.] 'My ſin is ever be-'fore me.' The thoughts are fixt, and there is no removing of them. It may give them a little interruption, but they return with the more impetuous violence; and inſtead of gaining them off, they at laſt, (or rather God by them) gains over the will alſo. (2.) When Satan hath to do with the ſoul in the way of temptation and helliſh ſuggeſtion. Look as the carnal will oppoſed itſelf to the thoughts in the former caſe to no purpoſe; ſo the ſanctified will oppoſes itſelf to them in this caſe, oft times with as little effect or ſucceſs, as he that oppoſeth his weak breath to the ſtrong current of a mighty river. Well were it, if the ſanctified will were now the maſter of the phantaſy, and could controul the thoughts of the heart; but, like a mad horſe, the fancy takes the bit in his teeth, and runs whither it pleaſeth; the will cannot govern it. Think quite another way, ſaith the will: turn thy thoughts to other things; but the ſoul turneth a deaf ear to its counſels. 2. It cannot quiet and compoſe a raging conſcience, and reduce it at its pleaſure to reſt and peace. This is the peculiar work of God. He only that ſtills the ſtormy ſeas, can quiet the diſtreſſed and tempeſtuous ſoul. The impotence of the will in this caſe is

known to all that have been in thoſe deeps of trouble.—And this is the miſery of the devil and the damned, that though they would never ſo fain, yet they cannot get rid of thoſe tormenting impreſſions made upon them by their own trembling and condemning conſciences. There would not be ſo many pale, affrighted conſciences on earth and in hell, if the will had any command or power over them. It is an horrible ſight to ſee ſuch a trembling upon all the members; ſuch a cold ſweat upon the panting boſom of a ſelf-condemned and wrath-preſaging ſoul, in which it can by no means relieve or help itſelf. Theſe things are exempt from the liberty and dominion of the will of man; but notwithſtanding theſe exemptions, it is a noble faculty, and hath a vaſtly extended empire in the ſoul of man: it is the door of the ſoul, at which the ſpirit of God knocks for entrance. When this is won, the ſoul is won to Chriſt; and if this ſtand out in rebellion againſt him, he is barred out of the ſoul, and can have no ſaving union with it. The truth of grace is to be judged and diſcerned by its compliance with his call, and the meaſure of grace to be eſtimated by the degree of its ſubjection to his will.

VII. The ſoul of man is not only endued with an underſtanding and will, but alſo with various affections and paſſions, which are of great uſe and ſervice to it, and ſpeak the excellency of its nature. They are originally deſigned and appointed for the happineſs of man, in the promoting and ſecuring his chiefeſt good, to which purpoſe they have a natural aptitude: for the true happineſs and reſt of the ſoul not being in itſelf, nor in any other creature but in God, the ſoul muſt neceſſarily move out of itſelf, and beyond all other created beings, to find and enjoy its true felicity in him. The ſoul conſidered at a diſtance from God, its true reſt and happineſs, is furniſhed and provided with deſire and hope to carry it on, and quicken its motion towards him. Theſe are the arms it is to ſtretch out towards him, in a ſtate of abſence from him. And ſeeing it is to meet with many obſtacles, enemies, and difficulties in its courſe, which hinder its motion,

tion, and hazard its fruition of him, God hath planted in it, fear, grief, indignation, jealouſy, anger, &c. to grapple with, and break through thoſe intercurrent difficulties and hazards. By theſe weapons in the hand of grace, it conflicts with that which oppoſes its paſſage to God, as the apoſtle expreſſes that holy fret and paſſion of the Corinthians, and what a fume their ſouls were in, by the gracious motion of the iraſcible appetite: [II. Cor. vii. 11.] 'For behold this ſelf-ſame thing, that ye ſorrowed 'after a godly ſort; what carefulneſs it wrought in you, 'yea, what clearing of yourſelves, yea, what indignation, 'yea, what fear, yea, what vehement deſire, yea, what 'zeal, yea, what revenge?' Much like the raging and ſtruggling of waters, which are interrupted in their courſe by ſome dam or obſtacle, which they ſtrive to bear down, and ſweep away before them.

But the ſoul conſidered in full union with, and fruition of God, its ſupreme happineſs, is accordingly furniſhed with the affections of love, delight, and joy; whereby it reſts in him, and enjoys its proper bleſſedneſs in his preſence for ever. Yea, even in this life theſe affections are in an imperfect degree exerciſed upon God, according to the prelibations and enjoyments it hath of him by faith in its way to heaven.—In a word, the true uſes and moſt excellent ends for which theſe affections and paſſions are beſtowed upon the ſoul of man, are to qualify it, and make it a fit ſubject to be wrought upon in a moral way of perſuaſions and allurements, in order to its union with Chriſt, (for by the affections, as Mr. Fenner rightly obſerves, the ſoul becomes marriageable, or capable of being eſpouſed to him) and being ſo, then to aſſiſt it in the proſecution of its full enjoyment in heaven. But, alas, how are they corrupted and inverted by ſin! The concupiſcible appetite greedily faſtens upon the creature, not upon God; and the iraſcible appetite is turned againſt holineſs, not ſin. But I muſt inſiſt no farther on this ſubject here, it deſerves an entire treatiſe by itſelf.

VIII. The

VIII. The ſoul of man hath, in the very frame and nature of it, an inclination to the body. There is in it a certain inclination which naturally bends or ſways it towards matter, or a body. There are three different natures found in living creatures, viz. 1. The brutal. 2. The angelical. 3. The human.

1. The ſoul of a brute is wholly confined to, and dependent on the matter or body with which it is united. It is dependent on it both in its being and working; it is but a material form, which riſes from, and periſheth with the body. (D) "The ſoul of a brute (ſaith Lord Chief Juſtice

(D) What is the preciſe difference between the brute and the human ſoul, is a queſtion not in our power to determine upon; nor, perhaps, is it of importance to us to know. But whether they are mere matter or pure ſpirit, involves in the ſolution ſuch ſerious conſequences, that we cannot paſs over this paſſage without animadverting a little upon it. Our pious author, and the learned judge whoſe philoſophy he follows, it ſhould ſeem, were not aware that by aſſerting a creature poſſeſſing thought, memory, will, &c. to be nothing more than a mere machine, they gave the contender for the materiality of the human ſoul the ſtrongeſt argument that could be adduced in favour of that opinion. For if matter, refined to a certain degree, can think, or act, or will on ever ſo ſmall a ſcale, then the ſame matter, a little more refined, may think and act in greater perfection: ſo that it may be nothing but the various modifications and refinements of matter that may conſtitute the difference between a brute, a human, or an angelic intelligence: for that brutes are ſo, (in what degree is not the matter of inquiry) we preſume the ſubſequent arguments will clearly prove.

To attempt to account for all the internal and external operations of brutes, upon the principles of mechaniſm, is to involve ourſelves in abſurdity, and contradict the cleareſt evidence. Was a cat a mere machine, ſhe could not diſtinguiſh a mouſe from a kitten, but would be equally indifferent to both. Was a dog a mere machine, he would not diſtinguiſh his maſter from a rabbit; much leſs would he purſue the latter, and careſs the former; any more than a clock can know its owner, or one ſtatue can hurt another.—Do we change the word mechaniſm for inſtinct? we ſhall ſoon find upon careful examination, that this is a mere term without an idea; a name for we know not what: and he that would diſtinguiſh between inſtinct and reaſon, muſt firſt find a medium between matter and ſpirit. Until this can be done, the following data, we preſume,

Juſtice Hale, in his Treatiſe de Anima, page 56.) is no other than a fluid bodily ſubſtance, the more lively, ſubtil,

preſume, may be fairly laid down as the ground of reaſoning upon this ſubject:

1. That mere matter is incapable of thinking. 2. That there is no medium between matter and ſpirit.

That brutes think can hardly be queſtioned by any thinking man. It is impoſſible to pay any attention to the inferior orders of animals around us, without being ſtruck with the irreſiſtible evidences which continually preſent us with proofs of this fact.—Nay, brutes not only think when they are awake, and their ſenſes are in full exerciſe, but they frequently do ſo even in their ſleep. A dog, as he lies extended by the fire-ſide, will ſometimes ſhew, by the whining noiſe he makes, and by the catching motion of his feet, that he is enjoying an imaginary chace in a dream. A cat, diſſolved in ſlumber will often, by various ſtarts and agitations, convince any unprejudiced obſerver, that ſhe fancies her prey full in view, and is preparing to ſeize it. And if by endeavouring to ſpring upon it, ſhe ſtarts from her pleaſing dream, ſhe will ſhew an evident concern and diſappointment. Now there can be no imagination without thought (nay, theſe two, are perhaps, in fact, things ſynonymous); nor can there be thought without ſome degree of reaſon; and that which reaſons muſt be ſomething ſuperior to matter, however modified, and eſſentially different from it.

Their power of voluntary motion, from place to place, is another argument in favour of their ſpirituality. Motion itſelf, ſimply conſidered, is not always an indication of an intelligent agent within; but voluntary motion is, and muſt be ſo in the very nature of things. An inanimate body ſet in motion by ſome exterior cauſe, would, as is univerſally allowed, go on in a ſtraight line *ad infinitum*, if not obſtructed in its courſe by the air, or ſome other intervening body. All involuntary motion, therefore, being neceſſarily, and in its own nature rectilinear; and the motions of beaſts not being neceſſarily rectilinear, but in all directions, and in any direction, as the occaſion requires; (for they in their way act as much *pro re nata* as we can do) it follows, that every beaſt has ſomething within which judges, conſults, and directs; which, as it cannot poſſibly be material, muſt be ſpiritual. If a dog was running towards you in a narrow way, and you was to ſtand in a menacing poſture, the animal would immediately ceaſe to proceed in a right line, becauſe he would know that that would be the wrong one for his ſafety: he would turn back, and if poſſible, eſcape by a contrary direction. What is this but practical reaſon? The language of ſuch conduct is apparently this: "If I go forward, danger is before me; if I return, or go another way, I may probably eſcape this danger: ergo, I will do the latter."—Could we ourſelves, in ſimilar circumſtances, argue more juſtly,

or

til, and refined part of the blood, called ſpirit, quick in motion, and from the arteries by the branches of the carotides

or act more wiſely? From which I conclude, that as there is evidently ſomething in every living creature, which diſcerns what is good, and puts him upon purſuing it; which likewiſe points out what is pernicious, and puts him upon avoiding it; this diſcerning, reaſoning, and inclining principle, muſt be eſſentially different from the mechanic ſyſtem it actuates, and can be no other in plain Engliſh than an intelligent ſoul.

That beaſts are poſſeſt of the five ſenſes, (though, perhaps, after all, every one of theſe ſenſes may in reality be reduced to one, viz. feeling) in as great, and ſometimes greater perfection than we, is a principle which I look upon as inconteſtable. Brutes are, if experience, which is practical demonſtration, carries any authority, as ſenſible of pain and pleaſure as man. Rub a cat's head, and ſhe will pur; pinch her tail, and ſhe will ſpit. Now I would aſk what it is that feels? the body, the fleſh, the blood, the nerves? No: for a dead animal has all theſe, and yet feels not. It is the ſoul that feels, and perceives, through the medium of the ſenſes: for what are the ſenſes, but channels of conveyance, and a ſort of mediator between outward objects, and the mind? In what way matter acts upon ſpirit, is unknown, but that it does ſo, every day's experience proves.

Memory alſo belongs to brutes. Memory is the power of recalling paſt ideas, and of recollecting paſt events. The perſon who denies that beaſts remember, muſt either be a man of no obſervation, or have a bad memory himſelf. Now there can be no memory without ideas; no ideas without thinking (for the forming of a compariſon and the combination of ideas are thought); no thinking without ſome degree of reaſoning; and no reaſoning without a reaſonable ſoul. There may be thought without memory, but memory there can be none without thought.

Had not this note already ſwelled to too great a length, we might go on to ſhew that the paſſions alſo are as ſtrong in them as they are in us. If brutes reaſon, that in them which does ſo, muſt be ſpirit, or an immaterial principle; which principle, being immaterial, muſt be perfectly ſimple and uncompounded: if perfectly ſimple, it muſt be in its own nature incorruptible; and if incorruptible, immortal. "And I will honeſtly confeſs," ſays a celebrated divine, "that I never yet heard one ſingle argument urged againſt the immortality of brutes, which, if admitted, would not, *mutatis mutandis*, be equally concluſive againſt the immortality of man."

[See a ſpeech delivered on this ſubject at the Queen's-Arms Tavern, Newgate-Street, by A. M. TOPLADY.

The reader will obſerve, that the preceding arguments are formed on common appearances, which, doubtleſs, is the faireſt method

carotides carried to the brain, and from thence conveyed to the nerves and muſcles, moves the whole frame and maſs

method of proving the queſtion; but were it neceſſary to produce them, there are not wanting inſtances of the ſagacity of brutes, which carry conviction of their intelligibility on the face of them. Among the innumerable inſtances which might be produced, we ſhall conclude with the two following, viz.

Martin Luther tells us of two goats (and goats are by no means conſidered as animals of bright intellects) who meeting together on a narrow plank over a deep river, and finding it impoſſible for them to paſs a-breaſt, one of them very prudently couched, that ſo the other walking over him, neither of them might be in danger of falling into the river. [See Mr. STEEL's Sermon (i. e. the third) in the IVth. Vol. of the Morning Exerciſes, page 56.]

If a goat knows how to conduct himſelf with prudence, when caſes of difficulty and danger call for the exerciſe of that talent; he can alſo prove himſelf no contemptible adept in the art of war, when either his own ſafety, or that of his family and friends, requires him to repel force by force. An inſtance of this occurs in the narrative of Lord Anſon's Voyage; which we ſhall give in the words of the author; premiſing only, that the theatre of the following unſucceſsful invaſion was the iſland of Juan Fernandez, in the Spaniſh Weſt Indies: "We once had an opportunity of obſerving a remarkable diſpute betwixt a herd of thoſe animals (i. e. of goats) and a number of dogs; for going in our boat into the Eaſtern Bay, we perceived ſome dogs running very eagerly upon the foot; and being willing to diſcover what game they were after, we lay upon our oars ſome time to view them, and at laſt ſaw them take to a hill; where, looking a little farther, we obſerved upon the ridge of it an herd of goats, which ſeemed drawn up for their reception. There was a very narrow path, ſkirted on each ſide by precipices, on which the maſter of the herd poſted himſelf, fronting the enemy; the reſt of the goats being all behind him, where the ground was more open. As this ſpot was inacceſſible by any other path, excepting where this champion had placed himſelf, the dogs, though they ran up hill with great alacrity, yet, when they came within twenty yards of him, they found they durſt not encounter him (for he would infallibly have driven them down the precipice) but gave over the chace, and quietly laid themſelves down, panting at a great rate." Could any commander upon the face of the globe have diſplayed more military ſkill, in taking all poſſible advantages of his ground, and more reſolute proweſs in maintaining it, than this Leonidas of the herd? And on the other hand, were not the invaders equally judicious in ſounding a timely retreat, and in not attempting to attack a fortreſs, which, both the nature of the place, and the diſcreet

maſs of the body; and receiving only certain weak impreſſions from the ſenſes, and of ſhort continuance, hindered and obſtructed of its work and motion, vaniſhes into the ſoft air."

2. An angel is a ſpirit free from a body, and created without an appetite or inclination to be embodied. The Stoics call the angels ſoul ſubſtances, and the Peripatetics abſtract forms. They are ſpirits free from the fetters and clogs of the body. An angel is a perfect ſoul, and an human ſoul an imperfect angel. Yet angels have no ſuch rooted diſaffection and abhorrence of a body, but that they have and can, in a ready obedience to their Lord's commands, and delight to ſerve him, aſſume bodies for a time, to converſe with men in them, (i. e. aerial bodies) in the figure and ſhape of human bodies. So we read, [Gen. xviii. 2.] 'Three men, (i. e. angels in hu-'man ſhape and appearance) ſtood by Abraham, and 'talked with him;' and at Chriſt's ſepulchre, [Luke xxiv.] 'There appeared two men in ſhining garments.' But they abide in theſe bodies as we do in an inn, for a night, or ſhort ſeaſon; they dwell not in them as our ſouls in thoſe houſes of fleſh, which we cannot put on and off at pleaſure, as they do; but as we walk in our garments, which we can put off without pain.

valour of the defendants, concurred to render impregnable? [ANSON's Voyage, quarto edition, p. 121, 122.

If our readers are ſtill inclined to call all this inſtinct, we have no objection, provided by this term is meant the particular natures of brutes; but if by it is underſtood an impulſe on the creatures, without their intelligence; that is to ſay, they avoid danger, not from an apprehenſion of danger, but becauſe they have an impulſe to avoid it:—Let the partridge, which tumbles along before the ſportſman, in order to draw off the dogs from her helpleſs covey, refute the idea.

If any apology be neceſſary for the inſertion of this note, we preſume it will be ſufficient to ſay, that our author's ſtrongeſt arguments for the ſpirituality of the human ſoul, goes on the ſuppoſition of the *vis inertiæ* of matter, [matter cannot feel, without a quickening and actuating ſoul, p. 55.] therefore, on his own principles, either the human ſoul may not be ſpirit, or the ſouls of brutes cannot be matter, and that is all we contend for.

3. The

3. The human ſoul is neither wholly tied to the body, as the brutal ſoul is, nor created without inclination to a body, as angels are; but loves and inclines to it, though it can both live and act without it, when it is parted from it at death. The proof of this aſſertion, and the reaſons why God created it with ſuch an inclination, will in their proper place be more fully ſpoken to in the following diſcourſe. All that I ſhall add is, that in this, as well as in ſome other reſpects, our ſouls are made a little lower than the angels; but when they are uncloathed of the body, and have received it again in a new edition, a ſpiritual body, then they ſhall be equal unto angels in the way and manner of life and action.

Thus I have, as briefly as I can, diſpatched the firſt thing propounded, viz. the nature of the ſoul, in the explication of theſe ſeven particulars. It is a ſubſtance, a vital, ſpiritual, and immortal ſubſtance, a ſubſtance endued with underſtanding, will, affections, and an inclination to the body. And now we are come to the

II. Branch, viz. Its Original and Infuſion.

I. As to its original, I have deſcribed it to be immediately from God, in the way of creation. An honour done to no other living creature except angels. The world hath been troubled with a great many extravagant and wild notions about the original of the ſoul of man: (a certain mark and argument of its apoſtaſy from God). Solinus writes of one, who by a wound in the hinder part of his head, fell into ſuch a degree of ignorance and oblivion, that he forgot his own name, and could not tell whether he had any name at all. But O! what a ſtunning blow did man receive by the fall, that he ſhould forget the very Author of his being, and rather claim alliance, and derive the being of his ſoul, from any thing than God; though it bears the very marks and characters of its divine Author and Father upon it! The principal errors about the origin of the ſoul may be reduced to theſe three heads:

(1.) Some affirm it to be by way of traduction, or natural generation from the parents to the child. This opi-

nion is very ancient, Tertullian and divers of the Weſtern fathers cloſed with it, as judging it the beſt expedient to ſolve the difficulties of the ſoul's taint and defilement with original ſin. But antiquity is no paſſport for errors. The grey hairs of opinions (as one well notes) are then honourable, when they are found in the way of truth. Dr. Brown tells as, "he ſhould rather incline to the creation, than the traduction of the ſoul, though either opinion, ſaith he, will conſiſt well enough with religion, did not one objection haunt him, and this is a concluſion from the equivocal and monſtrous productions by unnatural copulations; as of a man and beaſt: for if the ſoul of man, ſaith he, be not tranſmitted and transfuſed in the ſeed, why are not thoſe productions merely beaſts, but have alſo an impreſſion and tincture of reaſon in as high a meaſure as it can evidence itſelf in thoſe improper organs?"

Which way the Doctor's judgement had inclined in this controverſy, had been of no great conſideration to the determination of it; though it is pity we ſhould loſe his conſent and company, for the ſake of ſuch a beaſtly objection as this, which haunts his mind: for if there be any ſuch creatures, that ſeem to have a tincture of reaſon, it is but a tincture, and a ſeeming, not a real tincture neither, which many other brutes have. The Doctor is too well acquainted with philoſophy, and a man of too much reaſon, to allow himſelf to think that ſuch a production, as he ſpeaks of, hath two natures and eſſential forms in one body, as of a man and a horſe. He knows that every entity hath but one ſpecifical eſſence, and can have no more, except he will place one and the ſame thing under divers ſpecies in the predicament of ſubſtance.

And as there cannot be two diſtinct forms, ſo neither can there be a mixture of them in the centaur or monſtrous birth: for *ex duobus entibus per ſe, non fit unum ens per ſe.* But he confeſſeth this objection was bred among the weeds and tares of his own brain, (a rank ſoil no doubt) and I am pretty confident he had weeded it out in his

his latter years; for I find this notion of centaurs (that is, half horſes, half men) put into its proper place among the vulgar errors, Book i. chap. 4. And ſo I ſuppoſe that rub being out of the way, he returned again to us.

(2.) A ſecond opinion was, that they were procreated by angels; and that which gave the ground (ſuch as it is) to this opinion, or fancy, is the ſimilitude or reſemblance which is found betwixt angels and the ſouls of men. But this fancy needs not any induſtry to overthrow it; for though it be certain there is a ſimilitude and reſemblance betwixt angels and ſouls, both being immaterial and ſpiritual ſubſtances, yet angels neither propagate by generation, not is it in their power to create the leaſt fly or worm in the world, much leſs the ſoul of man, the higheſt, nobleſt, and moſt excellent being. Great power they have, but no creating power, that is God's incommunicable property; and procreate our ſouls they did not, for they are ſpirits, yet are ſpirits of another ſpecies.

(3.) A third ſort there are who deny not that ſouls are created ſubſtances, and proceeded from God; but affirm withal, that he created them together and at once, as the angels were, and not one by one, as men are born into the world. Of this opinion was Plato, who thought all human ſouls to be created together before their bodies, and placed in ſome glorious and ſuitable manſions, as the ſtars, till at laſt growing weary of heavenly, and falling in love with earthly things, for a puniſhment of that crime, they were caſt into bodies, as into ſo many priſons. Origen ſucked in this notion of the pre-exiſtence of ſouls. And upon this ſuppoſition it was, that Porphyry tells us, in the life of Plotinus, he bluſhed as often as he thought of his being in a body, as a man that had lived in reputation, and honour bluſhes when he is lodged in a priſon. The ground on which the Stoics bottomed their opinion was, the great dignity and excellency of the ſoul, which inclined them to think they had never been degraded and abaſed as they are by dwelling in ſuch vile bodies, but for their faults; and that it was for

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ſome former ſin of theirs, that they ſlid down into groſs matter, and were caught into a vital union with it; whereas, had they not ſinned, they had lived in celeſtial and ſplendid habitations more ſuitable to their dignity.

But this is a pure creature of fancy: for, (1.) No ſoul in the world is conſcious to itſelf of ſuch a pre-exiſtence, nor can remember when it was owner of any other habitation than that it now dwells in. (2.) Nor doth the ſcripture give us the leaſt hint of any ſuch thing. Some indeed would catch hold of that expreſſion, Gen. ii. 2. 'God reſted the ſeventh day from all the works 'which he had made:' and it is true, he did ſo, the work of creation was finiſhed and ſealed up, as to any new ſpecies or kind of creatures to be created; no other ſort of ſouls will ever be created, than that which was at firſt: but yet God ſtill creates individual ſouls (my Father worketh hitherto, and I work) of the ſame kind and nature with Adam's ſoul. And, (3) for their detruſion into theſe bodies as a puniſhment of their ſins in the former ſtate; if we ſpeak of ſin in individuals, or particular perſons, the ſcripture mentions none, either original or actual, defiling any ſoul in any other way but by its union with the body. Pre-exiſtence, therefore, is but a dream.

But to me it is clear, that the ſoul receives not its being by traduction or generation; for that which is generable, is alſo corruptible: but the ſpiritual, immortal ſoul (as it hath been proved to be) is not ſubject to corruption. Nor is it imaginable how a ſoul ſhould be produced out of matter, which is not endued with reaſon; or how a bodily ſubſtance can impart that to another, which it hath not in itſelf. If it be ſaid, the ſoul of the child proceeds from the ſoul of the parents, that cannot be; for ſpiritual ſubſtances are impartible, and nothing can be diſcinded from them. And it is abſurd to think the ſoul of Adam ſhould ſpring from one original, and the ſouls of all his offſpring from another, whilſt both his and theirs are of one and the ſame nature and ſpecies. To all which let me add, that as this aſſertion of their creation

tion is moſt reaſonable, ſo it is moſt ſcriptural. It is reaſonable to think and ſay, that no active power can act beyond or above the proper ſphere of its activity and ability. But if the ſoul be elicited out of the power of matter, here would be an effect produced abundantly more noble and excellent than its cauſe. And as it is moſt reaſonable, ſo it is moſt ſcriptural. To this purpoſe divers teſtimonies of ſcripture are cited and produced by our divines, amongſt which we may ſingle out theſe four, which are of ſpecial remark and uſe. [Heb. xii. 9.] 'Furthermore, we had fathers of our fleſh which cor-'rected us, and we gave them reverence; ſhall we not 'much rather be in ſubjection to *the Father of ſpirits* 'and live?' Here God is called the Father of ſpirits, or of ſouls, and that in an emphatical antitheſis, or contradiſtinction to our natural fathers, who are called the fathers of our fleſh, or bodies only. The true ſcope and ſenſe of this text is with great judgement and clearneſs given us by that learned and judicious divine Mr. Pemble, in theſe words: "Nothing is more plain and emphatical than this antitheſis, we receive our fleſh or body from our parents, but our ſouls from God: if then we patiently bear the chaſtiſements of our parents, who are authors of the vileſt part, and have the leaſt right or power over us, with how much more equal a mind ſhould we bear his chaſtiſements, who hath the ſupreme right to us, as he is the father, and only giver of that which is moſt excellent in us, viz. our ſouls or ſpirits!" Here it ſeems evident, that our ſouls flow not to us in the channel of fleſhly generation or deſcent, as our bodies do, but immediately from God their proper father, in the way of creation. Yet he begets them not out of his own eſſence or ſubſtance, as Chriſt his natural ſon is begotten, but out of nothing that had been before, as Theodoret well expreſſeth it. Agreeable hereunto is that place alſo in Zech. xii. 1. 'The Lord 'which ſtretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foun-'dations of the earth, and formeth the ſpirit of man 'within him:' where the forming of the ſpirit or ſoul of man is aſſociated with thoſe two other glorious effects

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of God's creating power, namely, the expanſion of the heavens, and laying the foundations of the earth; all three are here equally aſſumed by the Lord, as his remarkable and glorious works of creation. He that created the one, did as much create the other.

Now the two former we find frequently inſtanced in ſcripture, as the effects of his creating power, or works implying the almighty power of God, and therefore are preſented as ſtrong props to our faith, when it is weak and ſtaggering, for want of viſible matter of encouragement. [Iſa. xl. 22. and xlii. 5. Jer. x. 12. Job ix. 8. Pſal. civ. 2. q. d.] Are my people in captivity, and their faith nonpluſt and at a loſs, becauſe there is nothing in ſight that hath a tendency to their deliverance, no prepared matter for their ſalvation? Why, let them conſider who it was that created the heavens and the earth, yea, and their ſouls alſo, which are ſo perplexed with doubts, out of nothing; the ſame God that did this, can alſo create deliverance for his people, though there be no pre-exiſtent matter to work it out of.

Add to this that excellent place of Solomon in Eccl. xii. 7. 'Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth, as it 'was; and the ſpirit to God who gave it.' Where he ſhews us what becomes of man, and how each part, of which he conſiſts, is beſtowed and diſpoſed of after his diſſolution by death. And thus he ſtates it: theſe two conſtitutive parts of man are a ſoul, and a body; theſe two parts have two diſtinct originals; the body as to its material cauſe is duſt; the ſoul in its nature is a ſpirit, and as to its origin, it proceeded from the Father of ſpirits: it is his own creature in an immediate way. He gave it; he gave it the being it hath by creation, and gave it to us, i. e. to our bodies by inſpiration. When death diſſolves the union which is betwixt them, each part returns to that from whence it came, duſt to duſt, and the ſpirit to God that gave it. The body is expreſſed by its material cauſe, duſt, the ſoul only by its efficient cauſe, as the gift of God, becauſe it had no material cauſe at all, nor was made out of any pre-exiſtent matter, as the body was.

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And therefore Solomon here ſpeaks of God, as if he had only to do with the ſoul, leaving the body to its material and inſtrumental cauſes, with whom he concurs by a general influence. It is God, not man alone; or God by man, that hath given us theſe bodies; but it is not man, but God alone, who hath given us theſe ſouls. He therefore paſſeth by the body, and ſpeaks of the ſoul as the gift of God, becauſe that part of man, and that only, flows immediately from God, and at death returns to him that gave it. All theſe expreſſions, the Father of ſpirits, the former of the ſpirit in man, the giver of the ſpirit, how agreeable are they to each other, and all of them to the point under hand, that the ſoul flows from God by immediate creation? You ſee it hath no principle out of which (according to the order of nature) it did ariſe, as the body had; and therefore it hath no principle into which, according to the order of nature, it can be returned as the body hath; but returns to God its efficient cauſe, if reconciled, to a father, not only by creation, but adoption; if unreconciled, as a creature guilty of unnatural rebellion againſt the God that formed it, to be judged.

II. God created and infuſed it into the body with an inherent inclination and affection to it. The nature of the ſoul and body are vaſtly different, there is no affinity or ſimilitude betwixt them; but it is in this caſe, as in that of marriage. Two perſons of vaſtly different educations, conſtitutions, and inclinations, coming under God's ordinance, into the neareſt relation to each other, find their affections knit and endeared by their relation to a degree beyond that which reſults from the union of blood; ſo it is here. Whence this affection riſes, in what acts it is diſcovered, and for what reaſon implanted, will be at large diſcovered in a diſtinct branch of the following diſcourſe, to which it is aſſigned. Meanwhile I find myſelf concerned to vindicate what hath here been aſſerted againſt the arguments which are urged in favour of the immediate creation and infuſion of the ſoul, and in defence of the opinion of its traduction from the parents.

To conceal, or diſſemble theſe arguments and objections, would be but a betraying of the truth I have here aſſerted, and give occaſion for ſome jealouſy, that they are anſwerable; and firſt,

Object. 1. It is urged, that it is manifeſt in itſelf, and generally yielded, that the ſouls of all other creatures come by generation, and therefore it is probable that human ſouls flow in the ſame channel alſo.

Sol. There is a ſpecific difference betwixt rational ſouls and the ſouls of all other creatures, and therefore no force at all in the conſequence. A material form may riſe out of matter; but a ſpiritual, rational being (as the ſoul of man is) cannot ſo riſe, being much more noble and excellent than matter is.

What animal is there in the world, out of whoſe ſoul the acts of reaſon ſpring and flow, as they do out of human ſouls? Are they capable of inventing, or (which is much leſs) of learning the arts and ſciences? Can they correct their ſenſes, and demonſtrate a ſtar to be far greater than the whole earth, which to the eye ſeems no bigger than the rowel of a ſpur? Do they foreknow the poſitions and combinations of the planets, and the eclipſes of the ſun and moon many years before they ſuffer them? And if they cannot perform theſe acts of reaſon, as it is ſure they cannot, how much leſs can they know, fear, love, or delight in God, and long for the enjoyment of him! Theſe things do plainly evince human ſouls to be of another ſpecies, and therefore of an higher original than the ſouls of brutes. If all have one common nature and original, why are they not all capable of performing the ſame rational and religious acts?

Object. 2. But though it ſhould be granted, that the ſoul of the firſt man was by immediate creation and inſpiration from God, yet it follows not, that the ſouls of all his poſterity muſt be ſo too. God might create him with a power of begetting other ſouls after his own image. The firſt tree was created with its ſeed in itſelf to propagate its kind and ſo might the firſt man.

Sol. 1. Trees, animals, and ſuch like, were not created immediately out of nothing, as the ſoul of man was; but the earth was the pre-exiſtent matter out of which they were produced, by the word of God's bleſſing and power; but man's ſoul was immediately breathed into him by God, and had no pre-exiſtent matter at all. And beſides, all human ſouls being of one ſpecies, have therefore one and the ſame original: The ſoul of the pooreſt child is of equal dignity with the ſoul of Adam. And if we conſult Job xxxiii. 4. we ſhall find Elihu giving us there the ſame account, and almoſt in the ſame words, of the original of his ſoul, that Moſes in my text gives us of the original of Adam's ſoul. The ſpirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

Sol. 2. But it is evident, ſouls ſpring not from the parent, as one plant or animal doth from another; for they have their ſeed in themſelves apt and proper to produce their kind; but the ſeed of ſouls is not to be found in man: it is not to be found in his body; for then, as was ſaid before, a ſpiritual and nobler eſſence muſt be produced out of a material and baſer matter, i. e. the matter muſt give to the ſoul that which it hath not in itſelf. Nor is it to be found in his ſoul, for the ſoul being a pure, ſimple, and indiviſible being, can ſuffer nothing to be diſcinded from it towards the production of another ſoul: A ſpirit, as the ſoul is, is *ſubſtantia ſimplex & impartibilis*; an uncompounded and indiſcerpible or impartible being. Nor can it ſpring partly from the body and partly from the ſoul, as from con-cauſes; for then it ſhould be partly corporeal, and partly incorporeal, as its cauſes are. So that there is no matter, ſeed, or principle of ſouls found in man; and to be ſure, as Baronius ſtrongly argues, he cannot produce a ſoul without pre-exiſtent matter; for that were to make him omnipotent, and aſſign a creating power to a creature. Beſides, that which is generable is alſo corruptible, as we ſee trees, animals, &c. which are produced that way to be; but the ſoul is not corruptible, as hath in part been already

proved, and will more fully in the following diſcourſe. So that Adam's ſoul, and the ſouls of his poſterity, ſpring not from each other, but all from God by creation.

Object. 3. If the ſoul be created and infuſed immediately by God, either it comes out of his hands pure, or impure: if pure, how comes it to be defiled and tainted with ſin? If impure, how do we free God from being the author of ſin?

Sol. If the queſtion be, whether ſouls be pure or impure as ſoon as they are united with their bodies? the anſwer is, they are impure, and tainted as ſoon as united. For the union conſtitutes a child of Adam, and conſequently a ſinful impure creature. But if it reſpect the condition and ſtate in which God created them, I anſwer with Baronius, they are created neither morally pure, nor impure: they receive neither purity, nor impurity from him, but only their naked eſſence, and the natural powers and properties flowing therefrom. He inſpires not any impurity into them, for he cannot be the author of ſin, who is the revenger of it. Nor doth he create them in their original purity and rectitude; for the ſin of Adam loſt that, and God juſtly withholds it from his poſterity. Who wonders, ſaith Jenkins, to ſee the children, the palaces, and gardens of traitors to droop and decay, and the arms of his houſe, and badge of his nobility, to be defaced and reverſed? That which is abuſed by man to the diſhonour of God, may juſtly be deſtroyed (I add in this caſe, or withheld) by God, to the detriment of man. Adam voluntarily and actually deprived himſelf, and meritoriouſly deprived all his poſterity of that original righteouſneſs and purity in which he was created. As an holy God he cannot inſpire any impurity, and as a juſt and righteous God he may and doth withhold, or create them void and deſtitute of that holineſs and righteouſneſs, which was once their happineſs and glory.

Object. 4. But how come they then to be defiled and tainted with original ſin? It is confeſſed God did not impure them, and the body cannot, for it being matter,

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cannot act upon a ſpirit; yea, of itſelf it is a dead lump, and cannot act at all.

Sol. What if this be one of thoſe myſteries reſerved for the world to come, about which we cannot in this ſtate ſolve every difficulty that may be moved; muſt we therefore deny its divine original? What if I cannot underſtand ſome myſteries, or anſwer ſome queſtions about the hypoſtatical union of the two natures in the wonderful perſon of our Emanuel, muſt I therefore queſtion whether he be God-man? We muſt remain ignorant of ſome things about our own ſouls, till we come into the condition of the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.—Man ſince the fall being leſs than himſelf, underſtands not himſelf; nor will fully, till he be fully reſtored to himſelf in glory. [Norton's Orth. Evang. p. 337.] Mean time I think it much more our concernment to ſtudy how we may get ſin out of our ſouls, than to puzzle our brains to find how it came into them.

But that the objecter may not take this for an handſome ſlide or go-by to this great objection, I return to it in a few particulars.

(1.) That I think not original ſin follows either part ſingly, it comes in neither by the ſoul (E) alone, nor by the body alone apart from the ſoul; but upon the union and conjunction of both in one perſon. It is the union of theſe two, which conſtitutes a child of Adam, and as ſuch only we are capable of being infected with his ſin.

(2.) And whereas it is ſo confidently aſſerted in the objection, that ſin cannot come into the ſoul by or from the body, becauſe it being matter, cannot act upon a ſpirit: I ſay, this is eaſily ſpoken, but difficultly proved.

(E) The ſoul, ſay ſome, in the moment of its creation and infuſion by God, being united with the body by the plaſtic and formative virtue of the paternal ſeed; the parent may be truly ſaid to generate the man, though he do not produce the form: becauſe proper generation conſiſts in the union, and not the production of parts. So that original ſin is not propagated from body to body, nor yet from ſoul to ſoul, but from man to man.

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Cannot the body act upon or influence the ſoul? Pray then how comes it to paſs that ſo many ſouls become fooliſh, forgetful, injudicious, &c. by their union with ill-diſpoſed bodies? Nothing is more ſenſibly plain and evident, than that there is a reciprocal communication betwixt the ſoul and body. The body doth as really (though we know not how) affect the ſoul with its diſpoſitions, as the ſoul influences it with life and motion. The more excellent any form is, the more intimate is its union and conjunction with the matter. The ſoul of man hath therefore a more intimate and perfect union with the body, than light hath with the air; which is made by ſome the beſt emblem and ſimilitude to ſhadow forth this union. But the union betwixt them is too intimate to be conceived by the help of any ſuch ſimilitudes. That this infection is by way of phyſical agency, as a ruſty ſcabbard infects and defiles a bright ſword when ſheathed therein; I will not confidently affirm, as ſome do. It may be by way of natural concomitancy, as Eſtius will have it; or to ſpeak, as Dr. Reynolds (modeſtly, and as becomes men that are conſcious of darkneſs and weakneſs) by way of ineffable reſultancy and emanation.

(3.) In ſum, original ſin conſiſts in two things, viz.

1. In the privation of that original rectitude which ought to be in us.
2. In that habitual concupiſcence which carrieth nature to inordinate motions.

The privation and inordinate inclination make up that original corruption, the riſe whereof we are ſearching for; and to bring us as near as we can come, without a daring intruſion into unrevealed ſecrets, our ſolid divines proceed by theſe ſteps, in anſwering this objection.

(1.) If it be demanded, how it comes to paſs that an infant becomes guilty of Adam's ſin? The anſwer is, becauſe he is a child of Adam by natural generation.

(2.) But why is he deprived of that original rectitude in which Adam was created? They anſwer, becauſe Adam

Adam loſt it by his ſin, and therefore could not tranſmit what he had loſt to his poſterity.

(3.) But how comes he to be inclined to that which is evil? Their anſwer is, becauſe he wants that original rectitude: for whoſoever wants original rectitude, naturally inclines to that which is evil; and ſo the propenſion of nature to that which is evil ſeems to be by way of concomitancy, with the defect or want of original righteouſneſs.

And thus I have given ſome account of the nature and original of the ſoul of man, though, alas! my dim eyes ſee but little of its excellency and glory. Yet by what hath been ſaid, it appears the maſter-piece of all God's works of creation in this lower world.

But becauſe I ſuſpect the deſcription I have given of it will be obſcure and cloudy to vulgar readers of a plain and low capacity, by reaſon of divers philoſophical terms which I have been forced to make uſe of, and reckoning myſelf a debtor to the weak and unlearned, as well as others, I will endeavour to ſtrip this deſcription of the ſoul, for their ſakes, out of thoſe artificial terms which darken it to them, and preſent it once more in the moſt plain and intelligible epitome I am capable to give it in; that ſo the weaker underſtanding may be able to form a true notion of the nature and original of the ſoul in this manner.

The ſoul a ſubſtance.

This ſoul of mine is a true and real being; not a fancy, a conceit, a very nothing. It hath a proper and true being in itſelf, whether I conceit it or not. Nor indeed can I conceive of it, but by it. It is not ſuch a thing as whiteneſs is in ſnow, a mere accident, which depends upon the ſnow in which it is, for the being it hath; and muſt periſh as ſoon as the ſnow is diſſolved; my ſoul doth not ſo depend upon my body, or any other fellow creature for its being; but is as truly a ſubſtance as my body is, though not of ſo groſs and material a kind and nature. My ſoul can and will ſubſiſt and remain what it is, when my body is ſeparated from it; but my body cannot ſubſiſt and remain what it now is, when my ſoul is

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ſeparated from it. So that I find my ſoul to be the moſt ſubſtantial and noble part of me: it is not my body, but my ſoul which makes me a man. And if this depart, all the reſt of me is but a dead log, a lump of inanimate clay, a heap of vile duſt and corruption. From this independent ſubſiſtence it hath in itſelf, and the dependence its properties and affections have upon it, I truly apprehend and call it a ſubſtance.

But a ſpiritual ſubſtance,

But yet when I call it a ſubſtance, I muſt not conceive of it as a groſs, material, palpable ſubſtance, ſuch as my body is, which I can ſee and feel; no, there are ſpiritual ſubſtances as well as groſs, viſible, material ſubſtances. An angel is a ſpiritual ſubſtance, a real creature, and yet imperceptible by my ſight or touch; ſuch a ſubſtance is my ſoul. Spiritual ſubſtances are as real, and much more excellent than bodily ſubſtances are. I can neither hear, ſee, nor feel it; but I both ſee, hear, and feel by it.

A vital ſubſtance,

My ſoul is alſo a vital ſubſtance. It is a principle of life to my body. It hath a life in itſelf, and quickens my body therewith. My ſoul is the ſpring of all the actions and motions of life which I perform. It hath been an error taken from my childhood, that ſenſe is performed in the outward organs or members of my body, as touching in the hand, ſeeing in the eye, hearing in the ear, &c. in them, I ſay, and not only by them; as if nothing were required to make ſenſe, but an object and an organ. No, no, it is not my eye that ſeeth, nor my ear that heareth, nor my hand that toucheth, but my ſoul in and by them performs all this; let but an apoplex hinder the operations of my ſoul in the brain, and of how little uſe are my eyes, ears, hands, or feet to me? My life is originally in my ſoul, and ſecondarily by way of communication to my body. So that I find my ſoul to be a vital, as well as a ſpiritual ſubſtance.

An immortal ſubſtance.

And being both a vital and ſpiritual ſubſtance, I muſt needs conclude it to be an immortal ſubſtance. For in

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ſuch a pure ſpiritual nature as my ſoul is, there can be found no ſeeds or principles of death. Where there is no compoſition, there will be no diſſolution. My body indeed having ſo many jarring humours, mixed elements, and contrary qualities in it, muſt needs fail and die at laſt. But my ſoul was formed for immortality, by the ſimplicity and ſpirituality of its nature. No ſword can pierce it from without, nor oppoſition can deſtroy it from within. Man cannot, and God will not.

And being an immortal ſpirit, fitted and framed to live for ever, I find that God hath anſwerably endued and furniſhed it with an underſtanding, will, and affections, whereby it is capable of being wrought upon by the ſpirit in the way of grace and ſanctification in this world, in order to the enjoyment of God, its chief happineſs, in the world to come.

By this its underſtanding, I am diſtinguiſhed from, and advanced above all other creatures in this world. I can apprehend, diſtinguiſh, and judge of all other intelligible beings. By my underſtanding I diſcern truth from falſeſhood, good from evil; it ſhews me what is fit for me to chuſe, and what to refuſe.

To this faculty or power of underſtanding, my thoughts and conſcience do belong; the former to my ſpeculative, the latter to my practical underſtanding. My thoughts are all formed in my mind or underſtanding in innumerable multitudes and variety. By it I can think of things preſent or abſent; viſible or inviſible; of God or myſelf; of this or the world to come.

To my underſtanding alſo belongs my conſcience, a noble, divine, and awful power, by which I ſummon and judge myſelf, as at a ſolemn tribunal, bind and looſe, condemn and acquit myſelf and actions, but ſtill with an eye and reſpect to the judgement of God. Hence are my beſt comforts and worſt terrors.

This underſtanding of mine is the director and guide of my will: that is as the counſellor; this as the prince. It freely chuſeth and refuſeth as my underſtanding directs and ſuggeſts to it. The members of my body and paſ-

ſions of my ſoul are under its dominion. The former are under its abſolute command, the latter under its ſuaſions and inſinuations, though not abſolutely and always with effect and ſucceſs.

And both my underſtanding and will, I find to have great influence upon my affections.

The paſſions and affections of my ſoul are of great uſe and dignity. I find them as manifold as there are conſiderations of good and evil. They are the ſtrong and ſenſible motions of my ſoul, according to my apprehenſions of good and evil. By them my ſoul is capable of union with the higheſt good. By love and delight I am capable of enjoying God, and reſting in him as the center of my ſoul. This noble underſtanding, thoughts, conſcience, will, paſſions and affections, are the principal faculties, acts, and powers of this my high and heaven born ſoul. And being thus richly endowed and furniſhed,

I find it could never riſe out of matter, or come into my body by way of natural generation;* the ſouls of brutes that riſe that way, are deſtitute of underſtanding, reaſon, conſcience, and ſuch other excellent faculties and powers as I find in my own ſoul. They cannot know, or love or delight in God, or ſet their affections on things ſpiritual, inviſible, and eternal, as my ſoul is capable to do; it was therefore created and infuſed immediately into this body of mine by the Father of ſpirits, and that with a ſtrong inclination and tender affection to my fleſh, without which it would be remiſs and careleſs in performing its ſeveral duties and offices to it, during the time of its abode therein.

Fearfully and wonderfully therefore am I made, and deſigned for nobler ends and uſes, than for a few days to eat, and drink, and ſleep, and talk, and die. My ſoul is of more value than ten thouſand worlds. 'What ſhall 'a man give in exchange for his ſoul?'

* The reader will find this thought controverted p. 70, note; but our author's argument is ſo far from being affected thereby, that it is more ſolidly eſtabliſhed.—It is not neceſſary to ſuppoſe the ſouls of brutes to be matter, in order to prove thoſe of men to be ſpirit, but rather the contrary.

USE I.

From the ſeveral parts and branches of this deſcription of the ſoul, we may gather the choice fruits which naturally grow upon them in the following inferences. For we may ſay of them, what the hiſtorian doth of Paleſtine, that there is no branch or ſhrub barren or unfruitful. Let us then ſearch it branch by branch; and,

I. From the ſubſtantial nature of the ſoul, which we have proved to be a being diſtinct from the body, and ſubſiſting by itſelf, we are informed, That great is the difference betwixt the death of a man and the death of all other creatures in the world. In ſome things Solomon ſhews the agreement betwixt our death and theirs, [Eccleſ. iii. 19—21.] 'That which befalleth the ſons of men, be-'falleth the beaſt; even one thing befalleth them. As 'the one dieth, ſo dieth the other; all go to one place, 'all are of the duſt, and all turn to duſt again.' We breath the ſame common air they breath, we feel the ſame pains of death they feel; our bodies are reſolved into the ſame earth theirs are. But this is the difference, 'The 'ſpirit of man goeth upward, and the ſpirit of a beaſt 'goeth downward to the earth.' Their ſpirits go two ways at their diſſolution, the one to the earth, and the other to God that gave it, as he ſpeaks, [chap. xii. 7.]—Though our reſpiration and expiration have ſome agreement, yet great is the odds in the conſequences of death to the one and the other. They have no pleaſures nor pains beſides thoſe they enjoy or feel now; but ours are unſpeakable and eternal. The ſoul of man, like the bird in the ſhell, is ſtill growing and ripening in ſin or grace, till at laſt the ſhell breaks by death, and the ſoul flees away to the place it is prepared for, and where it muſt abide for ever.

How doth this conſideration expoſe and aggravate the folly and madneſs of the ſenſual world, who herd themſelves with beaſts, though they have ſouls ſo near of kin to angels! The princes and nobles of the world abhor to aſſociate themſelves with mechanics in their ſhops, or to

take a place among the ſottiſh rabble upon an ale-bench; they know and keep their diſtance and decorum, as ſtill carrying with them a ſenſe of honour, and abhorring to act beneath it: but we equalize our high and noble ſouls, in the manner of life with the beaſts that periſh. Our tables differ little from the crib at which they feed; or our houſes from the ſtalls and ſtables in which they lie down to reſt, in reſpect of any divine worſhip, or heavenly communication that is to be heard there. Happy had it been for ſuch men (if ſo they live and die) that their ſouls had been of no larger capacity, or longer duration than that of a beaſt; for then, as their comforts, ſo alſo their miſeries had ended at death.

Inf. 2. The ſoul of man being a ſubſtance, and not depending in its being on the body, or any other fellow-creature, there can be no reaſon on the ſoul's account, why its bleſſedneſs ſhould be delayed till the reſurrection of the body.

It is a great miſtake, that the ſoul is capable only of ſocial glory, or a bleſſedneſs in partnerſhip with the body; and that it can neither exert its own powers, nor enjoys its own happineſs in the abſence of the body. The opinion of a ſleeping interval took its riſe from this error; they conceived the ſoul to be ſo dependent upon the body, at leaſt in all its operations, that at death it muſt needs be left as in a ſwoon, or ſleep; unable to exert its proper powers, or enjoy that felicity, which we aſcribe to it in its ſtate and ſeparation.

But certainly its ſubſtantial nature being conſidered, it will be found, that what perfection ſoever the body receives from the ſoul, and how neceſſary ſoever its dependence upon it is, the ſoul receives not its perfection from the body, nor doth it neceſſarily depend on it in its principal operation, but it can live and act out of a body, as well as in it. Yea, I doubt not but it enjoys itſelf in a much more ſweet and perfect liberty, than ever it did or could, whilſt it was clogged and fettered with a body of fleſh. Doubtleſs, ſaith Tertullian, when it is ſeparated, and as it were ſtrained by death, it comes out of darkneſs into

into its own pure, perfect light, and quickly finds itself a ſubſtantial being, able to act freely in that light. Before the eyes of the dead body are cloſed, I doubt not but the believing ſoul with open eyes beholdeth the face of Jeſus Chriſt, [Luke xxiii. 43.—Philip. i. 23.] but this will alſo be further ſpoken to hereafter.

Inf. 3. The ſouls of men being created immediately out of nothing, and not ſeminally traduced, it follows, That all ſouls by nature are of equal value and dignity. One ſoul is not more excellent, honourable, or precious than another; but all by nature equally precious. The ſoul of the pooreſt beggar that cries at the door for a cruſt, is in its own nature, of equal dignity and value with the ſoul of the moſt glorious monarch that ſits upon the throne. And this appears to be ſo,

1. Becauſe all ſouls flow out of one and the ſame fountain, viz. the creating power of God. They were not made of better or worſe, finer or coarſer matter, but ἐκ μὴ ὀντου, out of nothing at all. The ſame Almighty Power was put forth to the forming of one, as of another. 'All ſouls are mine,' ſaith he that created them, [Ezek. xviii. 4.] the ſoul of the child, as well as the father; the ſoul of the beggar, as well as the king: thoſe that had no pre-exiſtent matter, but received their beings from the ſame efficient cauſe, muſt needs be equal in their original nature and value. The bodies of men that are formed out of matter, do greatly differ from one another: ſome are more exact, elegant, vigorous, and beautiful than others; but ſouls having no matter of which they conſiſt, are not ſo differenced.

2. All ſouls are created with a capacity of enjoying the infinite and bleſſed God. They need no other powers, faculties, or capacities than they are by nature endued with (if theſe be but ſanctified and devoted to God) to make them equally happy and bleſſed with them that are now before the throne of God in heaven, and with unſpeakable delight and joy behold his bleſſed face. We paſs through the fields, and take up an egg which lies under a clod, and ſee nothing in it but a little ſqualid matter;

ter; but in that egg is ſeminally and potentially contained ſuch a melodious lark, as it may be at the ſame time, we ſee mounting heavenward, and ſinging delicious notes above. So it is here. Thoſe poor deſpiſed ſouls, that are now lodged in crazy, deſpicable bodies on earth, have in their natures a capacity for the ſame employments and enjoyments with thoſe in heaven. They have no higher original than theſe have, and theſe have the ſame capacity and ability with them. They are beings improveable by grace to the higheſt perfections attainable by any creature. If thou be never ſo mean, baſe, and deſpicable a creature in other reſpects, yet haſt thou a ſoul, which hath the ſame alliance to the Father of ſpirits, the ſame capacity to enjoy him in glory, that the moſt excellent and renowned ſaints ever had.

3. All ſouls are rated and valued in God's book and account at one and the ſame price, and therefore by nature are of equal worth and dignity. Under the law, the rich and the poor were to give the ſame ranſom, [Exod. xxx. 15.] 'The rich ſhall not give more, and 'the poor ſhall not give leſs than half a ſhekel.' The redemption of ſouls by the blood of Chriſt coſts one and the ſame price. The pooreſt and moſt deſpiſed ſoul that believes in Jeſus, is as much indebted to him for the ranſom of his ſoul, as the greateſt and moſt illuſtrious perſon in the world. Moſes, Abraham, Paul, &c. did not coſt Chriſt more than poor Lazarus, or the meaneſt among all the ſaints did. 'The righteouſneſs of Chriſt is unto all, 'and upon all that believe, and there is no difference,' [Rom. iii. 22.]

But yet we muſt not underſtand this parity of human ſouls univerſally, or in all reſpects. Though being of one ſpecies, or common nature, they are all equal, and thoſe of them that are purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt, are all purchaſed at one rate; yet there are divers other reſpects and conſiderations, wherein there are remarkable differences betwixt ſoul and ſoul; as (1.) ſome ſouls are much better lodged and accommodated in their bodies than others are, though none dwell at perfect reſt and eaſe. God hath

lodged

lodged ſome ſouls in ſtrong, vigorous, comely bodies, others in feeble, crazy, deformed, and uncomfortable ones. An hiſtorian ſaith, the ſoul of Galba dwelt in an ill body; and Toſtatus, biſhop of Abulum, had ſo ſtrong and firm a conſtitution to endure ſevere ſtudies, that he is ſaid to have had a body of braſs. John wiſhes in behalf of his beloved Gaius, that his body might but proſper as his ſoul did; [Epiſt. iii. 2.] Timothy had his often infirmities. Indeed, the world is full of inſtances and examples of this kind. If ſome ſouls had the advantages of ſuch bodies as others have, who make little or no uſe of them, what ſervice would they do for God? (2.) There is a remarkable difference alſo betwixt ſoul and ſoul, in reſpect of natural gifts and abilities of mind. Some have great advantages above others in this reſpect. The natural ſpirits and organs of the body being more briſk and apt, the ſoul is more vigorous, and able to exert itſelf in its functions and operations. How clear, nimble, and firm are the apprehenſions, fancies, and memories of ſome ſouls beyond others! What a prodigy of memory, fancy, and judgement, was Father Paul the Venetian! And Suarez, of whom Strada ſaith, ſuch was the ſtrength of his parts, that he had all St. Auguſtine's works (the moſt copious and various of all the fathers) as it were by heart, ſo that I have ſeen him (ſaith he) readily pointing with the finger to any place or page he diſputed of. Our Dr. Reynolds excelled in this way to the aſtoniſhment of all that knew him, ſo that he was a living library, a third univerſity. But above all, the character given by Vives of Budeus is amazing, that there was nothing written in Geeek or Latin, which he had not turned over and examined; that both languages were alike to him, ſpeaking either with more facility than he did the French, his mother-tongue; and all by the penetrating force of his own natural parts, without a tutor. A happy and fruitful wit, which in itſelf found both a maſter and a ſcholar.—And yet Paſquier relates what is much more admirable of a young man, who came to Paris, in the twentieth year of his age, in the year 1445, and ſhewed himſelf ſo excellent

excellent and exact in all the arts, ſciences, and languages, that if a man of an ordinary good wit and ſound conſtitution ſhould live an hundred years, and during that time, ſtudy inceſſantly, without eating, drinking, ſleeping, or any recreation, he could hardly attain to that perfection. (3.) And yet a far greater difference is made betwixt one ſoul and another, by the ſanctifying work of the Spirit of God. This makes yet a greater diſparity, for it alters and new moulds the frame and temper of the ſoul, and reſtores the loſt image of God to it: by reaſon whereof the righteous is truly ſaid to be 'more excellent than his 'neighbour,' [Prov. xii. 26.] This ennobles the ſoul, and ſtamps the higheſt dignity and glory upon it, that it is capable of in this world. It is true, it hath naturally an excellency and perpetuity in it above other beings; as cedar hath not only a beauty and fragrancy, but a ſoundneſs and durability far beyond other trees of the wood: but when it comes under the ſanctification of the Spirit, then it is as cedar overlaid with gold. (4.) Laſtly, a wonderful difference will be made betwixt one ſoul and another by the judgement of God in the great day. Some will be bleſſed, and others curſed ſouls, [Matt. xxv. ult.] ſome received into glory, others ſhut out into everlaſting miſery, [Matt. viii. 11, 12.] 'Many ſhall come from 'the eaſt and weſt, and ſhall ſit down with Abraham, and 'Iſaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the 'children of the kingdom ſhall be caſt out into utter 'darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of 'teeth.'

And that which will be the ſting and aggravation of the difference which will then be made, will be this parity and equality in the nature and capacity of every ſoul; by reaſon whereof, they that periſh, will find they were naturally as capable of bleſſedneſs as thoſe that enjoy it; and that it was their own inexcuſable negligence and obſtinacy that was their ruin.

Inf. 4. If God be the immediate Creator and Former of the ſoul of man, then ſin muſt needs involve the moſt unnatural evil in it, as it is an horrid violation of the very

very law of nature. No title can be ſo full, ſo abſolute, as that which creation gives. How clear is this in the light of reaſon? If God created my ſoul, then my ſoul had once no being at all; that it had ſtill remained nothing, had not the pleaſure of its Creator choſen and called it into the being it hath, out of the millions of mere poſſible beings; for as there are millions of poſſible beings, which yet are nothing, ſo there are millions of poſſible beings, which never ſhall be at all. So that ſince the pleaſure and power of God was the only fountain of my being, he needs muſt be the rightful owner of it. What can be more his own, than *that* whoſe very being flowed merely from him, and which had never been at all, had he not called it out of nothing?

And ſeeing the ſame pleaſure of God which gave it a being, gave it alſo a reaſonable being, capable of, and fitted for moral government by laws, which other inferior natures are incapable of; it muſt needs follow, that he is the ſupreme governor, as well as the rightful owner of this ſoul.

Moreover, it is plain, that he who gave my ſoul its being, and ſuch a being gave it alſo all the good it ever had, hath, or ſhall have; and that it neither is, nor hath any thing but what is purely from him; and therefore he muſt needs be my moſt bountiful benefactor, as well as abſolute owner and ſupreme governor. There is not a ſoul which he hath created but ſtands bound to him in all theſe ties and titles. Now for ſuch a creature to turn rebelliouſly upon its abſolute owner, whoſe only and wholly it is; upon its ſupreme governor, to whom it owes entire and abſolute obedience; upon its bountiful benefactor, from whom it hath received all, and every mercy it ever had or hath; to violate his laws, ſlight his ſovereignty, deſpiſe his goodneſs, and contemn his threatenings, pierce his very heart with grief, darken the glory of all his attributes, confederate with Satan his malicious enemy, and ſtrike, as far as a creature can ſtrike, at his very being, (for in a ſenſe, every ſin ſtrikes at the life and very exiſtence of God:) bluſh, O heavens, at this,

and be ye horribly afraid! O curſed ſin, the evil of all evils, which no epithet can match; no name worſe than its own can be invented, ſinful ſin! This is as if ſome venemous branch ſhould drop poiſon upon the root that bears it. Love and gratitude to benefactors is an indelible principle engraven by nature upon the hearts of all men. It teacheth children to love and honour their parents, who yet are but mere inſtruments of their beings. O how juſt muſt their perdition be, who caſting off the very bonds of nature, turn again with enmity againſt that God! O think, and think again on what Mr. Burroughs once ſaid, 'What a ſad charge this will be againſt many a man at the great day, when God ſhall ſay, Hadſt thou been made a dog, I never had had ſo much diſhonour as I have had!" It is pity God ſhould not have honour from the meaneſt creature that ever he made, from every pile of graſs in the field, or ſtone in the ſtreet; much more that he ſhould not have glory from a ſoul, more precious and excellent than all the other works of his hands. Surely, it is better for us our ſouls had ſtill remained only in the number of poſſible beings, and had never had an actual exiſtence in the ſecond rank of beings, but a very little lower than the angels, than that we ſhould ſtill be diſhonouring God by them. O that he ſhould be put to levy his glory from us paſſively; that it ſhould be with us as it was with Nebuchadnezzar, from whom God had more glory when he was driven out amongſt the beaſts of the field, than when he ſat on the throne! In like manner his glory will riſe paſſively from us, when driven out among devils, and not actively and voluntarily, as from the ſaints.

Inf. 5. If God create and inſpire the reaſonable ſoul immediately, this ſhould inſtruct and incite all Chriſtian parents to pray earneſtly for their children, not only when they are born into the world, but when they are firſt conceived in the womb.

It is of great concernment both to us and our children, not only to receive them from the womb, with bodies perfectly and comely faſhioned; but alſo with ſuch ſouls

inſpired

inſpired into them, whereby they may glorify God to all eternity. It is natural to parents to deſire to have their children full and perfect in all their bodily members, and it would be a grievous affliction to ſee them come into the world defective, monſtrous, and miſhapen birth; ſhould a leg, an arm, an eye be wanting, ſuch a defect would make their lives miſerable, and the parents uncomfortable. But how few are concerned with what ſouls they are born into the world. Good God (ſaith Muſculus) how few ſhall we find, who are equally ſolicitous to have ſuch children as may live piouſly and honeſtly, as they are to leave them inheritances, upon which they may live ſplendidly and bravely! It pleaſeth us to ſee our own image ſtampt upon their bodies; but O! how few pray even whilſt they are in the womb, that their ſouls may in due time bear the image of the heavenly, and not animate and uſe the members of their bodies, as weapons of unrighteouſneſs againſt the God that formed them!

Certainly, except they be quickened with ſuch ſouls, as may in this world be united with Chriſt, better had it been for them that they had periſhed in the womb, whilſt they were pure embryoes, and had never come into the number and account of men and women; for ſuch embryoes go for nothing in the world, having only the rudiments and rough draughts of bodies, never animated and informed by a reaſonable ſoul; [Job iii. 11, 12.] But as ſoon as ſuch a ſoul enters into them, though for never ſo little a time, it entails eternity upon them. We alſo know, that as ſoon as ever God breathes or infuſes their ſouls into them, ſin preſently enters, and death by ſin, and that by us, as the next inſtruments of conveying it to them: which ſhould have the efficacy of a mighty argument with us, to lay our prayers and tears for mercy in the very foundation of that union.

Think on this particularly, you that are mothers of children, when you find the fruit of the womb quickened within you, that you then bear a creature within you of more value than all this viſible world; a creature, upon whom, from that very moment, an eternity of happineſs

or miſery is entailed; and therefore it concerns you to travail as in pain for their ſouls, before you feel the ſorrows and pangs of travail for their bodies. What a pity is it, that a part of yourſelves ſhould eternally periſh!—That ſo rare and excellent a creature as that you bear, ſhould be caſt away for ever, for want of a new creation ſuperadded to that it hath already! O let your cries and prayers for them anticipate your kiſſes and embraces of them! You cannot begin your ſuits for mercy too early for them, nor continue them too long, though your prayers meaſure all the time betwixt their conception and their death.

Inf. 6. Moreover, if God have created our ſouls vital ſubſtances, to animate and act thoſe bodies, how indiſpenſably neceſſary is it that a principle of ſpiritual life do quicken and govern that ſoul, which quickens and governs our bodies and all the members of them! Otherwiſe, though in a natural ſenſe we have living ſouls, yet they are dead whilſt they live.

The apoſtle in I. Cor. xv. 45, 46. compares the animal life we live, by the union of our ſouls and bodies, with the ſpiritual life we live, by the union of our ſouls with Jeſus Chriſt. 'The firſt man Adam was made a li-'ving ſoul, the laſt Adam was made a quickening ſpirit.' He oppoſes the animal to the ſpiritual life, and the two Adams from whom they came; and ſhews in both reſpects the excellency of the ſpiritual above the animal, not in point of priority, for that which is natural, is before that which is ſpiritual, (and it muſt be ſo, becauſe the natural ſoul is the recipient ſubject of the Spirit's quickening and ſanctifying operations) but in point of dignity and real excellency. To how little purpoſe, or rather to what a diſmal and miſerable purpoſe, are we made living ſouls, except the Lord from heaven by his quickening power makes us ſpiritual and holy ſouls? The natural ſoul rules and uſes the body, as an artificer doth his tools: [The body bears reſemblance to an organ, the ſoul to an artiſt. Iren. B. ii.] And except the Lord renew it by grace, Satan will rule that which rules thee, and ſo all

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thy members will be inſtruments of iniquity to fight againſt God. "The actions performed by our bodies, are juſtly reputed and reckoned by God to the ſoul," ſaith Origen; becauſe the ſoul is the ſpring of all its motions, the fountain of its life and operations. What it doth by the body its inſtrument, is as if it were done immediately by itſelf; for without the ſoul it can do nothing.

Inf. 7. Moreover, from the immaterial and ſpiritual nature of the ſoul we are informed, that communion with God, and the enjoyment of him, are the true and proper intentions and purpoſes for which the ſoul of man was created.

Such a nature as this is not fitted to live upon groſs, material, and periſhing things as the body doth. The food of every creature is agreeable to its nature, one cannot ſubſiſt upon that which another doth; as we ſee among the ſeveral ſorts of animals; what is food to one, is none to another. In the ſame plant there is found a root which is food for ſwine, a ſtalk which is food for ſheep, a flower which feeds the bee, and a ſeed on which the bird lives. The ſheep cannot live upon the root, as the ſwine doth, nor the bird upon the flower, as the bee doth; but every one feeds upon the different parts of the plant, which are agreeable to its nature. So it is here, our bodies being of an earthly, material nature can live upon things earthly and material, as moſt agreeable to them, they can reliſh and ſuck out the ſweetneſs of theſe things; but the ſoul can find nothing in them ſuitable to its nature and appetite, it muſt have ſpiritual food, or periſh. It were therefore too brutiſh and unworthy of a man that underſtood the nature of his own ſoul, to cheer it up with the ſtores of earthly proviſions made for it, as he did, [Luke xii. 20.] 'I will ſay to my ſoul, ſoul, thou 'haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, 'eat, drink, and be merry.' Alas, the ſoul can no more eat, drink, and be merry with carnal things, than the body can with ſpiritual and immaterial things: it cannot feed upon bread that periſheth, it can reliſh no more in the beſt and daintieſt fare of an earthly growth, than in the white of

an egg: but bring it to a reconciled God in Chriſt, to the covenant of grace, and the ſweet promiſes of the goſpel; ſet before it the joys, comforts and earneſts of the Spirit; and if it be a ſanctified, renewed ſoul, it can make a rich feaſt upon theſe. Theſe make it a feaſt of fat things, full of marrow, as it is expreſſed, [Iſaiah xxv. 6.] Spiritual things are proper food for ſpiritual and immaterial ſouls.

Inf. 8. The ſpiritual nature of the ſoul farther informs us, that no acceptable ſervice can be performed to God, except the ſoul be employed and engaged therein.

The body hath its part and ſhare in God's worſhip as well as the ſoul; but its part is inconſiderable in compariſon: [Prov. xxiii. 26.] 'My ſon, give me thy heart,' *i. e.* thy ſoul, thy ſpirit. The holy and religious acts of the ſoul are ſuitable to the nature of the object of worſhip: [John iv. 24.] 'God is a ſpirit, and they that worſhip him, muſt worſhip in ſpirit and in truth.' Spirits only can have communion with the great Spirit. That were made ſpirits for that very end, that they might be capable of converſe with the Father of ſpirits. They that worſhip him, muſt worſhip in ſpirit and in truth; that is, with inward love, fear, delight, and deſires of ſoul, that is to worſhip him in our ſpirits: and in truth, *i. e.* according to the rule of his word which preſcribes our duty. Spirit reſpects the inward power; Truth, the outward form. The former ſtrikes at hypocriſy, the latter at ſuperſtition and idolatry. The one oppoſes the inventions of our heads; the other, the looſeneſs and formality of our hearts.

No doubt but the ſervice of the body is due to God and expected by him, for both the ſouls and bodies of his people are bought with a price, and therefore he expects we glorify him with our ſouls and bodies, which are his: but the ſervice of the body is not accepted of him, otherwiſe than as it is animated and enlivened by an obedient ſoul, and both ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt. Separate from theſe bodily exerciſe profits nothing, [I. Tim. iv. 8.] What pleaſure can God take in the fruits and evidences of men's hypocriſy? [Ezek. xxxiii. 31.]

Holy

Holy Paul appeals to God in this manner, [Rom. i. 9.] 'God is my witneſs' (ſaith he) 'whom I ſerve with my 'ſpirit;' q. d. I ſerve God in my ſpirit, and he knows that I do ſo. I dare appeal to him who ſearches my heart, that it is not idle and unconcerned in his ſervice. The Lord humbles us for our careleſs, gadding, and vain ſpirits, even when we are engaged in his ſolemn ſervices. O that we were once ſo ſpiritual, to follow every excurſion from his ſervice with a groan, and retract every wandering thought with a deep ſigh! Alas, a cold and wandering ſpirit in duty is the diſeaſe of moſt good men, and the very temper and conſtitution of all unſanctified ones. It is a weighty and excellent expreſſion of the Jews in their prayer book; "Wherewithal ſhall I come before his face, unleſs it be with my ſpirit? for man hath nothing more precious to preſent to God than his ſoul." Indeed it is the beſt man hath, thy heart is thy totum poſſe, it is all that thou art able to preſent to him. If thou caſt thy ſoul into thy duty, thou doſt as the poor widow did, caſt in all that thou haſt. And in ſuch an offering the great God takes more pleaſure than in all the external, coſtly, pompous ceremonies, adorned temples, and external devotions in the world. It is a remarkable and aſtoniſhing expreſſion of his own in this caſe; [Iſa. lxvi. 1, 2.] 'Thus ſaith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the 'earth is my footſtool: where is the houſe that ye build 'to me, and where is the place of my reſt? for all theſe 'things have mine hands made, and all theſe things have 'been, ſaith the Lord: but unto this man will I look, 'even to him that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and 'trembleth at my word,' q. d. Think not to pleaſe me with magnificent temples, and adorned altars. If I had pleaſure in ſuch things, heaven is a more glorious throne than any you can build me, and yet I have more delight in a poor contrite ſpirit, that trembles with an holy awe and reverence at my word, than I have in heaven or earth, or all the works of my hands in either. O! if there had been more trembling at his word, there had not been been ſuch trembling as now there is, under fears of the

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loſs and removal of it. Some can ſuperſtitiouſly reverence and kiſs the ſacred duſt of the ſanctuary, as they call it, and expreſs a great deal of zeal for the externals of religion, but little conſider how ſmall the intereſt of theſe things is in religion, and how little God looks at, or regards them.

Inf. 9. How much are the ſpirits of men ſunk by ſin below the dignity and excellency of their nature?

Our ſouls are ſpirits by nature, yet have they naturally no delight in things ſpiritual: they decline that which is homogeneal and ſuitable to ſpirits, and reliſh nothing but what is carnal and unſuitable to them. How are its affections inverted and miſplaced by ſin! that noble, ſpiritual, heaven born creature, the ſoul, whoſe element and center God alone ſhould be, is now fallen into a deep oblivion both of God and itſelf; and wholly ſpends its ſtrength in the purſuit of ſenſual and earthly employments, and becomes a mere drudge and ſlave to the body. Carnal things now meaſure out and govern its delights and hopes, its fears and ſorrows. O how unſeemly is it, to behold ſuch an highborn ſpirit lackying up and down the world in the ſervice of the periſhing fleſh! 'Their heart, (ſaith the prophet) 'goeth after their covetouſneſs, [Ezek. xxxiii. 31.] as a ſervant at the beck or nod of his maſter.'

O! how many are there to be found in every place, who melt down the precious affections and ſtrength of their ſouls in ſenſitive, brutiſh pleaſures and delights? [James v. 5.] 'Ye have lived in pleaſures upon earth,' as the fiſh in the water, or rather as the eel in the mud; never once lifting up a thought or deſire to the ſpiritual and eternal pleaſures that are at God's right hand.

Our creation did not ſet us ſo low; we are made capable of better and higher things.

God did not inſpire ſuch a noble, excellent, ſpiritual ſoul into us, merely to ſalt our bodies, or carry them up and down this world for a few years, to gaze at the vanities of it. It was a great ſaying of Seneca, I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I ſhould be a ſlave to my body. We have a ſpirit about us, that might better underſtan-

underſtand its original, and know it is not ſo baſe a being as its daily employments ſpeak it to be. The Lord raiſe our apprehenſions to a due value of the dignity of our own ſouls, that we may turn from theſe ſordid employments with a generous diſdain, and ſet our affections on what is agreeable to, and worthy of an high born-ſpirit.

Inf. 10. Is the ſoul of man a vital, ſpiritual, and immortal ſubſtance? Then it is no wonder, that we find the impreſſions of the world to come naturally engraven upon the ſouls of men all the world over. Theſe ſentiments of another life after this do as naturally and neceſſarily ſpring out of an immortal nature, as branches ſpring out of the body of a tree, or feathers out of the body of a bird. So fairly and firmly are the characters and impreſſions of the life to come ſealed upon the immortal ſpirits of all men, that no man can offer violence to this truth, but he muſt alſo do violence to his own ſoul, and unman himſelf by the denial of it. Who feels not a chearineſs to ſpring from his abſolving, and an horror from his accuſing conſcience? Neither of which could riſe from any other principal than this. We are beings conſcious to ourſelves of a future ſtate, and that our ſouls do not vaniſh when our breath doth; that we ceaſe not to be, when we ceaſe to breath.

And this is common to the moſt barbarous and ſavage heathens: they ſhew (ſaith the apoſtle) the work of the law written in their hearts, their conſciences alſo bearing them witneſs, and their thoughts in the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another. By the work of the law underſtand the ſum and ſubſtance of the ten commandments, comprizing the duties to be done, and the ſins to be avoided. This work of the law is ſaid to be written upon the hearts of the Gentiles, who had no external written laws; upon their hearts it was written, though many of them gave themſelves over to all uncleanneſs: and they gave evidence that there was ſuch a law written upon their hearts, two ways: (1.) Some of them ſhewed it in their temperance, righteouſneſs, and moral honeſty, wherein they excelled many of us,

who have far greater advantages and obligations. (2.) In the efficacy of their conſciences, which, as it cleared and comforted them for things well done, ſo it witneſſed againſt them, yea, judged and condemned them, for things ill done. And theſe evidences of a law written on the heart are to be found, wherever men are to be found. Their ignorance and barbarity cannot ſtifle theſe ſentiments and impreſſions of a future ſtate, and a juſt tribunal, to which all muſt come. And the univerſality of it plainly evinces, that it ſprings not out of education, but the very nature of an immortal ſoul.

Let none ſay that theſe univerſal impreſſions are but the effects of an univerſal tradition, which hath been time out of mind ſpread among the nations of the world: for as no ſuch univerſal tradition can be proved; ſo if it could, the very propenſion that is found in the minds of all men living to cloſe with the propoſals of a life to come, will evince the agreeableneſs of them to the nature of an immortal ſoul. Yea, the natural cloſing of the ſoul with theſe propoſals will amount to an evidence of the reality and exiſtence of thoſe inviſible things. For as the natural ſenſes and their organs prove, that there are colours, ſounds, ſavours, and juices; as well as, or rather becauſe there are eyes, ears, &c. naturally fitted to cloſe with and receive them; ſo it is here, if the ſoul naturally looks beyond the line of time to things eternal, and cannot bound and confine its thoughts and expectations within the too narrow limits of preſent things, ſurely there is ſuch a future ſtate, as well as ſouls made apprehenſive of it, with a propenſity to cloſe with the diſcoveries thereof. So natural are the notions of a future ſtate to the ſouls of men, that thoſe who have ſet themſelves deſignedly to baniſh them, and ſtruggled hard to ſuppreſs them, as things irkſome and grievous, giving interruption to their ſenſual luſts and pleaſures; yet ſtill theſe apprehenſions have returned upon them, and gotten a juſt victory over all their objections and prejudices: they follow them whereſoever they go, they can no more flee from them, than

than from themſelves; whereby they evidence themſelves to be natural and indelible things.

Inf. 11. Hath God endowed the ſoul of man with underſtanding, will, and affections, whereby it is made capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying God? It is then no wonder to find the malice and envy of Satan engaged againſt man more than any other creature, and againſt the ſoul of man rather than any thing elſe in man.

It cut Haman to the very heart, to ſee the honour that was done to Mordecai; much more doth it grate and gall Satan, to ſee what Jeſus Chriſt hath purchaſed and deſigned for the ſouls of men. Other creatures being naturally incapable of this happineſs, do therefore eſcape his fury; but men ſhall be ſure to feel it, as far as he can reach them; [I. Pet. v. 8.] 'Your adverſary the devil goeth about like 'a roaring lion ſeeking whom he may devour; he walks to 'and fro,' that ſpeaks his diligence; ſeeking whom he may 'devour,' that ſpeaks his deſign; his reſtleſneſs in doing miſchief is all the reſt and relief he hath in his own torments. It is a mark of pure and perfect malice to endeavour to deſtroy, though he knows he ſhall never be ſucceſsful in his attempts. We read of many bodies poſſeſſed by him, but he never takes up his quarters in the body of any, but with deſign to miſchief the ſoul. No room but the beſt in the houſe will ſatisfy him, no blood ſo ſweet to him as ſoul blood. If he raiſe perſecution againſt the bodies of men, it is to deſtroy their ſouls; holineſs is that he hates, and happineſs is the object of his envy; the ſoul being the ſubject of both, is therefore purſued by him as his prey.

Inf. 12. Upon the conſideration both of its excellent nature, and divine original, it follows, that the corruption and defacing of ſuch an excellent creature by ſin, deſerves to be lamented, and greatly bewailed; and the recovery of it by ſanctification to be ſtudied, and diligently proſecuted, as the great concern of all men.

What a beautiful and bleſſed creature was the ſoul of man at firſt, whilſt it ſtood in its integrity! His mind was bright, clear, and apprehenſive of the law and will of

God: his will cheerfully complied therewith; his ſenſitive appetite, and inferior powers, ſtood in an obedient ſubordination. God made man upright, [Eccl. vii. 29.] ישר ſtraight, and equal, bending to neither extreme. The law of God was fairly engraven upon the table of his heart. Principles of holineſs and righteouſneſs were inlayed in the very frame of his mind, fitting him for an exact and punctual diſcharge of his duties both to God and man. This was the ſoundneſs of his conſtitution, the healthful temper of his inner man; whereby it became the very region of light, peace, purity, and pleaſure. For think how ſerene, lightſome, and placid the ſtate of that ſoul muſt be, in which there was no obliquity, not a jar with the divine will; but joy and peace continually transfuſed through all its faculties!

But ſin hath defaced its beauty, raſed out the divine image which was its glory, and ſtamped the very image of Satan upon it; turned all its noble powers and faculties againſt the author and fountain of its being. Surely, if all the poſterity of Adam, from the beginning to the end of the world, ſhould do nothing elſe but weep and ſigh for the ſin and miſery of the fall, it could not be ſufficiently deplored: other ſins, like ſingle bullets, kill particular perſons; but Adam's ſin, like a chain-ſhot, mowed down all mankind at once. It murdered himſelf actually; all his poſterity virtually; and Chriſt his Saviour occaſionally. O! what a black train of doleful conſequents attended this ſin! It hath darkened the bright eye of the ſoul's underſtanding, [I. Cor. ii. 14.] made its complying and obedient will ſtubborn and rebellious, [John v. 40.] rendered his tender heart obdurate and ſenſeleſs, [Ezek. xxxvi. 26.] filled its ſerene and peaceful conſcience with guilt and terror. [Tit. i. 15.] The conſideration of theſe things is very humbling, and ſhould cauſe thoſe that glory in their high and illuſtrious deſcents, to wrap their ſilver ſtar in cypreſs, and cover all their glory with a mourning vail. But this is but one part of their duty.

How ſhould this conſideration provoke us to apply ourſelves with moſt ſerious diligence, to recover our loſt

beauty and dignity in the way of ſanctification! This is the great and moſt proper uſe of the fall, as Muſculus excellently ſpeaks; "to inflame our deſires the more vehemently after grace." Sanctification reſtores the beauty of the ſoul, which ſin defaced, [Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10.] yea, it reſtores it with this advantage, that it ſhall never be loſt again; holineſs is the beauty of God impreſt upon the ſoul, and the impreſſion is everlaſting. Other beauty is but a fading flower; time will plow up deep furrows upon the faireſt faces, but this will be freſh to eternity. All moral virtues, homilitical qualities which adorn and beautify nature, and make it attractive and lovely in the eyes of men, are but ſeparable accidents, which death crops off like a ſweet flower from the ſtalk. [Job. iv. 21.] 'Doth not their excellency that is in them go away?' But ſanctification is inſeparable, and will aſcend with the ſoul into heaven. O! that God would ſet the glaſs of the law before us, that we may ſee what defiled ſouls we have by nature, that we might come by faith to Jeſus Chriſt, who cometh to us by water, and by blood! [I. John v. 6.]

Inf. 13. To conclude, upon the conſideration of the whole matter before us, if this excellent creature, the ſoul, receive both its being and excellencies from God; then he that formed it, muſt needs have the full and only right to poſſeſs and uſe it, and is therefore moſt injuriouſly kept out of the poſſeſſion of it by all unſanctified and diſobedient perſons.

The ſoul of man is a building of God, he hath laid out the treaſures of his wiſdom, power and goodneſs in this noble ſtructure; he built it for an habitation for himſelf to dwell in. And indeed ſuch noble rooms, as the underſtanding, will, and affections, are too good for any other to inhabit. But ſin hath ſet open the gates of this hallowed temple, and let in the abomination which maketh deſolate. All the doors of the ſoul are barred and chained up againſt Chriſt, by ignorance and infidelity: he ſeeks for admiſſion into the ſoul which he hath made, but findeth none. A forcible entry he will

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not make, but expects when the will ſhall bring him the keys of the ſoul, as to its rightful owner. So he expreſſeth himſelf to us in Rev. iii. 20. 'Behold, I ſtand at the 'door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open 'the door, I will come into him, and ſup with him, and 'he with me.' His ſtanding at the door denotes his earneſt deſire, and patient waiting, in the uſe of all thoſe means that are introductive of Jeſus Chriſt into the ſouls of men: his knocking, ſignifies the various eſſays he makes by ordinances and providences externally, and the convictions and perſuaſions of his ſpirit, and the conſciences of ſinners internally: every call of the word, and every conviction of conſcience is a call, a knock from heaven, at the door of the ſoul, for the admiſſion of Chriſt into it. By the ſoul's hearing his voice, and opening the door, underſtand its approbation and conſent to the motion and offer of God. By Chriſt's coming in, is meant his uniting that ſoul unto himſelf that opens to him: and as his coming in denotes union; ſo his ſupping with the ſoul, and the ſoul with him, denotes his ſweet communion; imperfect here, complete and full in heaven. O the admirable condeſcenſions of God to poor ſinners! The God that formed you with a word, and can as eaſily ruin you with a frown, yet waits at the gates of your ſouls for admiſſion into them. There be many ſouls within the ſound of this complaint, that have kept God out of his own right all their days. They have ſhut out Jeſus Chriſt, and delivered up their ſouls to Satan; if he but knock by a ſlight temptation, the door is preſently opened: but Jeſus Chriſt may wait in vain upon them, from ſabbath to ſabbath, and from year to year. But the longeſt day of his patience hath an end. And there is a refuſal of grace, after which no more tenders of mercy ſhall ever be made.

What ſay you, ſouls, will you at laſt open the door to Jeſus Chriſt, or will you ſtill exclude him? If you will open to him, he will not come in empty handed, he will bring a feaſt with him, ſuch a feaſt as you never taſted any thing like it in your lives: but if you will not

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open to him, then I call heaven and earth to witneſs againſt you this day, that you have once more barred the doors of your ſouls againſt him, whoſe pleaſure and power gave them their very beings; againſt him who is their ſovereign lord, and rightful owner; and conſequently, this act of yours muſt ſtop your mouths, and deprive you of all pleas and apologies, when you ſhall knock hereafter at the door of mercy, and God ſhall for ever ſhut it up againſt you, according to his juſt, but dreadful threatenings, [Mat. vii. 22. Prov. i. 24, 25.] And thus much of the divine original, and excellent nature of the ſoul of man. Having taken a view of this excellent creature, the ſoul, in opening the former propoſition; we come next to the conſideration of its union with the body, in this ſecond propoſition:

Doct. II. That the ſouls and bodies of men are knit together by the feeble band of the breath in their noſtrils.

"There is (ſaith the learned Mr. How) no greater myſtery in nature, than the union betwixt the ſoul and body: that a mind and ſpirit ſhould be ſo tied and linked with a clod of clay; that while that remains in a due temper, it cannot by any art or power free itſelf. It can by an act of the will move an hand, or a foot, or the whole body; but cannot move from it one inch. If it move hither, or thither, or by a leap upward do aſcend a little, the body ſtill follows; it cannot ſhake or throw it off. We cannot take ourſelves out; by any allowable means we cannot, nor by any at all (that are at leaſt within mere human power) as long as the temperament laſts. While that remains, we cannot go; if that fail, we cannot ſtay; though there be ſo many open avenues we cannot go out or in at pleaſure. A wonderful thing! and I wonder, we no more wonder at our own make and frame in this reſpect.—What ſo much a kin are a mind and a piece of earth, a clod and a thought, that they ſhould be thus affixed to one another?" My deſign here is to ſhew by what ligament, tie, or bond it hath pleaſed the great and wiſe Creator, to affix and link theſe ſo different parts of man together: and this Moſes

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not make, but expects when the will ſhall bring him the keys of the ſoul, as to its rightful owner. So he expreſſeth himſelf to us in Rev. iii. 20. 'Behold, I ſtand at the 'door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open 'the door, I will come into him, and ſup with him, and 'he with me.' His ſtanding at the door denotes his earneſt deſire, and patient waiting, in the uſe of all thoſe means that are introductive of Jeſus Chriſt into the ſouls of men: his knocking, ſignifies the various eſſays he makes by ordinances and providences externally, and the convictions and perſuaſions of his ſpirit, and the conſciences of ſinners internally: every call of the word, and every conviction of conſcience is a call, a knock from heaven, at the door of the ſoul, for the admiſſion of Chriſt into it. By the ſoul's hearing his voice, and opening the door, underſtand its approbation and conſent to the motion and offer of God. By Chriſt's coming in, is meant his uniting that ſoul unto himſelf that opens to him: and as his coming in denotes union; ſo his ſupping with the ſoul, and the ſoul with him, denotes his ſweet communion; imperfect here, complete and full in heaven. O the admirable condeſcenſions of God to poor ſinners! The God that formed you with a word, and can as eaſily ruin you with a frown, yet waits at the gates of your ſouls for admiſſion into them. There be many ſouls within the ſound of this complaint, that have kept God out of his own right all their days. They have ſhut out Jeſus Chriſt, and delivered up their ſouls to Satan; if he but knock by a ſlight temptation, the door is preſently opened: but Jeſus Chriſt may wait in vain upon them, from ſabbath to ſabbath, and from year to year. But the longeſt day of his patience hath an end. And there is a refuſal of grace, after which no more tenders of mercy ſhall ever be made.

What ſay you, ſouls, will you at laſt open the door to Jeſus Chriſt, or will you ſtill exclude him? If you will open to him, he will not come in empty handed, he will bring a feaſt with him, ſuch a feaſt as you never taſted any thing like it in your lives: but if you will not

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open to him, then I call heaven and earth to witneſs againſt you this day, that you have once more barred the doors of your ſouls againſt him, whoſe pleaſure and power gave them their very beings; againſt him who is their ſovereign lord, and rightful owner; and conſequently, this act of yours muſt ſtop your mouths, and deprive you of all pleas and apologies, when you ſhall knock hereafter at the door of mercy, and God ſhall for ever ſhut it up againſt you, according to his juſt, but dreadful threatenings, [Mat. vii. 22. Prov. i. 24, 25.] And thus much of the divine original, and excellent nature of the ſoul of man. Having taken a view of this excellent creature, the ſoul, in opening the former propoſition; we come next to the conſideration of its union with the body, in this ſecond propoſition:

Doct. II. That the ſouls and bodies of men are knit together by the feeble band of the breath in their noſtrils.

"There is (ſaith the learned Mr. How) no greater myſtery in nature, than the union betwixt the ſoul and body: that a mind and ſpirit ſhould be ſo tied and linked with a clod of clay; that while that remains in a due temper, it cannot by any art or power free itſelf. It can by an act of the will move an hand, or a foot, or the whole body; but cannot move from it one inch. If it move hither, or thither, or by a leap upward do aſcend a little, the body ſtill follows; it cannot ſhake or throw it off. We cannot take ourſelves out; by any allowable means we cannot, nor by any at all (that are at leaſt within mere human power) as long as the temperament laſts. While that remains, we cannot go; if that fail, we cannot ſtay; though there be ſo many open avenues we cannot go out or in at pleaſure. A wonderful thing! and I wonder, we no more wonder at our own make and frame in this reſpect.—What ſo much a kin are a mind and a piece of earth, a clod and a thought, that they ſhould be thus affixed to one another?" My deſign here is to ſhew by what ligament, tie, or bond it hath pleaſed the great and wiſe Creator, to affix and link theſe ſo different parts of man together: and this Moſes

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in the text tells us, is no other but the breath of his noſtrils.

The breath and ſoul of man are two diſtinct things. His breath is not his ſoul, nor his ſoul his breath, but the bond that couples and unites his ſoul and body in a perſonal union. The body hath no life in itſelf, but its life reſults from its union with the ſoul. [Jam. ii. 26.] This union is maintained by the breath of our noſtrils, which upon that account is here called the breath of life. Breath is an act of life, proceeding from the ſoul's union with its body, and ending with the diſſolution of it. Life is continued by its reſpiration, and ended by its expiration. Whilſt we live, and whilſt breath is in our bodies, are terms ſynonimous. For the uſe and office of reſpiration, the lungs were formed and placed where they are, not without the moſt wiſe counſel and direction of God. They are that organ in the body, which by the help of that artery, leading to them as a channel, for the paſſage of air from the mouth and noſtrils, the air is tranſmitted to, and ventilated by them for the refreſhment of the heart, and exhaling the fumes thereof. The heart hath continual need of ſuch a vent and refreſhment; and therefore the lungs, like a pair of bellows, muſt be kept continually going. Longer than breath is going the heart is dying; that which ſtops the one, ſuffocates the other. [Alſted. Theolog. Nat. p. 614.]

And here we may with admiration contemplate the wonders by which our lives are continued. Theſe lungs are the moſt frail and tender part of the body, and kept in continual motion and agitation; yet are made ſerviceable for ſeventy or eighty years together, which is the wonder of Providence. Were a piece of braſs, iron, or ſteel, kept in continual and inceſſant uſe, it would not endure half the time. In a word, the heart, that noble part of the body, is the ſhop wherein the ſpirits are laboured and prepared, which therefore is in continual motion and heat; and ſo needs continual cooling and refreſhing. We can live no longer than its labours;

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it can labour no longer than it is refreſhed and cooled by reſpiration. God hath therefore prepared the lungs for this ſervice; which being of a thin, porous, and ſpongy ſubſtance, can eaſily be dilated and contracted. By dilating themſelves, they attract and ſuck in the air into themſelves; firſt duly to prepare and temper it, and then communicate it to the heart for its refreſhment; which being quickly heated in the heart, is again breathed out by the lungs, by contracting themſelves again. This double motion of inſpiration and expiration we call reſpiration; and this reſpiration is the bond that holds our ſouls and bodies together. [Keckerm. Phyſ. p. 142.]

And indeed, this is but a feeble bond, a very ſlender and weak thread which holds our ſouls and bodies in union. What more volatile and uncertain than a puff of breath? The noſtrils are the outer door of the body, our breath is continually in our noſtrils; and how ſoon may that depart which is day and night at the door, as if it were ſtill taking its leave of us? Our breath is always going, and what is ſtill going, will be gone at laſt. How ſmall a difference is there betwixt reſpiration and expiration? A breathing, and a breathleſs lump of clay? Breath cannot continue long, and life cannot ſtay a moment behind it. [Pſal. civ. 29.] 'Thou takeſt away 'their breath, they die, and return to their duſt.' Life is breath given, and death is breath taken away. The breath of man is like a written ſentence, in which there are diverſe comma's or ſhort pauſes, after which ſpeedily follows a full ſtop, and there's an end of it. Some conceive Solomon points at the continual motion of the lungs, in that figurative and elegant deſcription of the death of man, [Eccl. xii. 6.] 'Or ever the ſilver cord 'be looſed, or the golden bowl be broken; or the pitcher 'be broken at the fountain, or the wheel be broken at 'the ciſtern.' The double motion of the lungs he ſeems here to compare to the double motion of the buckets in a well; the turn of the wheel ſends one down, and draws the other up. [Alſted. ibid.] But as we uſe to ſay proverbially, the bucket or pitcher that goes ſo often to the ciſtern or

well is broken at laſt; ſo muſt we ſay of theſe, they will fail at laſt. One ſitting by the bedſide of a dying perſon, ſighed out this compaſſionate expreſſion, *Ah! quid ſumus?* His ſick friend hearing it, replied, *Pulvis, & umbra, fumus*, duſt, a ſhadow, a puff of wind. The wind without us is fickle and inconſtant to a proverb, and ſo is that within us too. Many grudge at the ſhortneſs of life; but conſidering the feebleneſs of this bond, we have more cauſe to wonder at the ſlowneſs of death.—For let us ſeriouſly conſider the frailty of our breath on a double account, viz. 1. In reſpect of our breathing inſtruments. 2. Or of breath-ſtopping accidents.

1. Great is the frailty of our breathing inſtruments.—What is fleſh but weakneſs? Even the moſt ſolid and ſubſtantial: it is as the fading graſs, [Iſa. xl. 6.] But our lungs are the more lax, ſpongy, and tender of all fleſh, if that which is ſo airy, light, and ſpumous, deſerve the name of fleſh. And as it is the moſt frail of all fleſh, ſo it is in continual motion, labouring night and day, without reſt or intermiſſion; and that which wants alternate reſt cannot be durable. We ſee motion wears out the wheels of a watch, though made of braſs; but 'our 'ſtrength (as Job ſpeaks) is not the ſtrength of ſtones, 'nor our bones (the moſt ſolid, much leſs our lungs, the 'moſt frail and feeble parts) of braſs.' Beſide,

2. There are a multitude of breath-ſtopping accidents, which may, and daily do beat the laſt breath out of men's noſtrils, before any decay of nature cauſe it to expire.—Many mortal diſeaſes are incident to theſe frail and tender parts. Phthiſics, intenerations, ulcers, eaſily bar the paſſage of our breath there; yea, and ſlighter accidents, which immediately touch not that part, are ſufficient to ſtop our breath, and diſlodge our ſouls. A fly, a gnat, the ſtone of a raiſin, a crumb of bread, have often done it. There is not a pore in the body, but is a door large enough to let in death, nor a creature ſo deſpicably ſmall, but is ſtrong enough (if God commiſſionate it) to ſerve a writ of ejection upon the ſoul. The multitude of diſeaſes

eaſes are ſo many lighted candles put to this ſlender thread of our breath, beſides the infinite diverſity of external accidents, by which multitudes daily periſh. So that there are as great and aſtoniſhing wonders in our preſervation as in our creation.

Inf. 1. How admirable then is the myſtery of Providence in the daily continuation of the breath of our noſtrils!

That our breath is yet in our noſtrils is only from hence, that he who breathed it into them at firſt is our life, and the length of our days. [Deut. xxx. 20.] It is becauſe our breath is in his hand, [Dan. v. 23.] not in our own, or in our enemies hand. Till he take it away, none ſhall be able to do it, [Pſal. civ. 29.] 'Thou takeſt 'away their breath, they die, and return to their duſt.' It is neither food nor phyſic, but God in and by them, 'that holdeth our ſoul in life. [Pſal. lxvi. 9.] We hang every moment of our life over the grave, and the gulf of eternity, by this ſlender thread of our breath; but it cannot break, how feeble ſoever it be, till the time appointed be fully come. If it be not extinguiſhed and ſuffocated as others daily are, it is becauſe he puts none of thoſe diſeaſes upon us, [Exod. xv. 26.] or if he do, yet he is Jehovah Rophe, the Lord that healeth us. We live in the midſt of cruel enemies, yea, 'among them that breathe 'out cruelty. [Pſal. xxvii. 12.] Such breath would quickly ſuffocate ours, did not he in whoſe hands ours is, wonderfully prevent it. O what cauſe have we to employ and ſpend that breath in his praiſe, who works ſo many daily wonders to ſecure it!

Inf. 2. Is it but a puff of feeble breath, which holds ſouls and bodies in union?—Then every man is deeply concerned to make all haſte, to take all poſſible care and pains to ſecure a better and more durable habitation for his ſoul in heaven, whilſt yet it ſojourns in this frail tabernacle of the body.

The time is at hand, when all theſe comely and active bodies ſhall be ſo many breathleſs carcaſſes, no more capable of any uſe or ſervice for our ſouls, than the dead

bodies that lie buried under your feet. Your breath is yet in your noſtrils, and all the means and ſeaſons of ſalvation will expire with it; and then it will be as impoſſible for the beſt miniſter in the world to help your ſouls, as for the ableſt phyſician to recover your bodies. As phyſic comes too late for the one, ſo counſels and perſuaſions for the other. Three things are worthy thinking on in this matter.

1. That you are not without the hopes and poſſibilities of ſalvation, whilſt the breath of life is in your noſtrils. A mercy (how lightly ſoever you value it) that would raviſh with joy thoſe miſerable ſouls that have already ſhot the gulf of eternity, and turn the ſhrieks and groans of the damned into joyful ſhouts and acclamations of praiſe. Poor wretch, conſider what thou readeſt; that thy ſoul is not yet in Chriſt, is thy greateſt miſery, but that yet it may be in Chriſt, is an unſpeakable mercy; though thy ſalvation be not yet ſecured, yet what a mercy is it that it is not deſperate.

2. When this uncertain breath is once expired, the laſt hope of every unregenerate perſon is gone for ever: it is as impoſſible to recover hope, as it is to recover your departed breath, or recal the day that is paſt. When the breath is gone, the compoſitum is diſſolved: we ceaſe to be what now we are, and our life is a water ſpilt upon the ground, which ſhall not be gathered up till the reſurrection. Our life is carried like a precious liquor in a brittle glaſs, which death breaks to pieces. The ſpirit is immediately preſented to God, and fixed in its unalterable ſtate. [Heb. ix. 27.] All means of ſalvation now ceaſe for ever; no ambaſſadors of peace are ſent to the dead; no more calls or ſtrivings of the Spirit; no more ſpace for repentance. O what an inconceivable weight hath God hung on a puff of breath!

3. And ſince matters ſtand thus, it is to be admired what ſhift men make to quiet themſelves in ſo dangerous a ſtate as moſt ſouls live in; quiet and unconcerned, and yet but one puff of breath betwixt them and hell! O the ſtupefying and befotting nature of ſin! O the efficacy and

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power of ſpiritual deluſions! Are our lives ſuch a throng and hurry of buſineſs, that we have no time to go alone, and think where we are, and where we ſhortly muſt be! What ſhall I ſay? If bodily concerns be ſo weighty, and the matters of eternity ſuch trifles: if meat, and drink, and trade, and children be ſuch great things; and Chriſt, and ſoul, and heaven, hell, and the world to come, ſuch little things in your eyes, you will not be long in that opinion, I dare aſſure you.

Inf. 3. Is the tie ſo weak betwixt our ſouls and bodies?—How cloſe and near then do all our ſouls confine and border upon eternity?

There is no more but a blaſt of wind betwixt this world and that to come, a very ſhort ſtep betwixt time and eternity. There is a breath which will be our laſt breath; reſpiration muſt and will terminate in expiration: the dead are the inhabitants, and the living are borderers upon the inviſible world. This conſideration deſerves a dwelling-place in the hearts of all men, whether, 1. regenerate—or, 2. unregenerate.

I. Regenerate ſouls ſhould ponder this with pleaſure. O it is tranſporting to think how ſmall a matter is betwixt them and their complete ſalvation! No ſooner is your breath gone, but the full deſire of your hearts is come: every breath you draw draws you a degree nearer to your perfect happineſs: [Rom. xiii. 11.] 'Now is 'your ſalvation nearer than when you believed;' therefore both your cheerfulneſs and diligence ſhould be greater than when you were in the infancy of your faith. You have run through a conſiderable part of your Chriſtian courſe and race, and are now come nearer the goal and prize of eternal life. O deſpond not, loiter not now at laſt, who were ſo fervent and zealous in the beginning!—It is tranſporting to think how near you approach the region of light and joy. O that you would diſtinctly conſider, 1. Where you lately were.—2. Where now you are.—3, Where ſhortly you ſhall be.

1. You that are now ſo near ſalvation, were lately very near unto damnation: there was but a puff of breath betwixt

betwixt you and hell. How many nights did you ſleep ſecurely in the ſtate of nature and unregeneracy? How quietly did you reſt upon the brink of hell, not once imagining the danger you were in? Had any of thoſe ſickneſſes you then ſuffered been ſuffered by God, like a candle, to burn aſunder this ſlender thread of life which was ſo near them, you had been as miſerable and as hopeleſs as thoſe that now are roaring in the loweſt hell. I have heard of one that rid over a dangerous bridge in the night, who upon the review of the place next day, fell into a ſwoon when he was ſenſible of that danger which the darkneſs of the night hid from him. O reader, ſhall not an eſcape from hell affect thee as much as ſuch an eſcape would do!

2. It is no leſs marvellous to conſider where you now are; you that were afar off, are now made nigh, [Epheſ. ii. 13.] you that were not beloved, are now beloved, [Rom. ix. 25.] You were in the ſtate of death and condemnation; you are now paſſed from death to life by your free juſtification, [I. John iii. 14.] Your union with Chriſt hath ſet you free from condemnation; [Rom. vii. 1.] Die you muſt, though Chriſt be in you, but there is no hazard or hurt in your death. The ſtopping of your breath can put no ſtop to your happineſs; it will haſten, not hinder it. If the pale horſe come for you, heaven, not hell, will now follow him; your ſins are pardoned, the covenant of your ſalvation ſealed. Death is diſarmed of its fatal ſting; and what then is to hinder you from a like triumph, even upon your death-bed? [I. Cor. xv. 55.] 'O death, where is thy ſting! O 'grave, where is thy victory!

3. And yet you have more room for joy, whilſt you conſider where you muſt and ſhall be ſhortly. You are now *in* Chriſt, but in a few days you ſhall be *with* Chriſt as well as in him; it is well now, but it will be better ere long. Your perſons are freed from guilt, but your hearts are not either freed from filth or grief; but in a little time you ſhall be abſolutely and eternally freed from both. Your preſent condition is an heaven, compared

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with your former, and your future ſtate will be an heaven indeed, compared with your preſent. 'The path of the 'juſt is as the ſhining light, which ſhineth more and 'more unto the perfect day.' [Prov. iv. 18.]

II. But on the other ſide, what meditation can be more ſtartling and amazing to all the unregenerate and Chriſtleſs world? Ponder it, thou poor Chriſtleſs and unſanctified ſoul. Get thee out of the noiſe and clamour of this world, which makes ſuch a continual din in thine ears, and conſider how thou hangeſt over the mouth of hell itſelf, by the feeble thread which is ſpun every moment out of thy noſtrils; as ſoon as that gives way, thou art gone for ever. What ſhift do you make to quiet your fears, and eat, and drink, and labour with any pleaſure? It is ſtoried of Dionyſius the tyrant, that when Democles would have flattered him into a conceit of the perfection of his happineſs, as he was an abſolute ſovereign prince, and could do what he pleaſed with others, as his vaſſals; Dionyſius, to confute his fancy, cauſed him to be placed at a table richly furniſhed, and attended with the moſt curious muſic, but juſt over his head hung a ſharp and heavy ſword by one ſingle hair; which, when Democles ſaw, no meat would go down with him, but he earneſtly begged for a diſcharge from that place. This is the lively emblem of thy condition, thou unregenerate man. There are three things in thy ſtate ſadly oppoſed to that laſt deſcribed: 1. The ſtate you were born in was bad.—2. The ſtate you are now in is worſe.—3. The ſtate you ſhall ſhortly be in, if you thus continue, will be unſpeakably worſt of all.

1. The ſtate you were born in, was a ſad ſtate: you were in ſin, [Pſal. li. 5.] and under wrath, [Epheſ. ii. 3.] the womb of nature caſt you forth into this world, both defiled and condemned creatures. 2. The ſtate you are in now, is much worſe than that you were born in; for what have you been doing ever ſince you were born, but treaſuring up wrath againſt the day of wrath? [Rom. ii. 5.] For every ſand of time which run out of the glaſs of God's patience towards you,

you, a drop of wrath hath been running into the phials of his indignation againſt you. O what a treaſure of ſin and wrath then is laid up in ſo many years as you have lived in ſin! Every ſin committed, every mercy abuſed, every call of God neglected and ſlighted, adds ſtill more and more to this treaſure. 3. It will be much worſe ſhortly than it is now, except preventing, renewing grace ſtep in betwixt you and that wrath, into which you are haſtening ſo faſt. It is ſad to be under the ſentence of condemnation, but unſpeakably worſe to be under the execution of that ſentence. To be a Chriſtleſs man is lamentable, but to be a hopeleſs man is more lamentable. For though you be now without Chriſt, yet whilſt the breath of life is now in your noſtrils, you are not abſolutely without hope; but when once that breath is gone, all the world cannot ſave or help you. Your laſt breath and your laſt hope expire together. Though you be under God's damning ſentence, yet that ſentence through the riches of forbearance is not executed: but as ſoon as you die, all that wrath which hung over your heads, ſo many years, in the black clouds of God's threatenings, will pour down in a furious ſtorm upon you, which will never break up whilſt God is God. O think, and think again, and let your thoughts think cloſe to this ſad and ſolemn ſubject, there is but a breath betwixt you and hell!

Inf. 4. Doth God maintain your life by breath?—Let not that breath deſtroy your life, which God gave to preſerve it.

No man can live without breath, and yet ſome might live longer than they do, if their breath were better employed. Some men's throats have been cut by their own tongues, as the Arabian proverb intimates. Life and death (ſaith Solomon) are in the power of the tongue. Critics obſerve that a word, and a plague, grow upon the ſame root in the Hebrew tongue. It is certain, that ſome men's breath hath been baneful poiſon both to themſelves and others. It was a word that cut off the life of Adonijah, [I. Kings ii. 23.] and thouſands ſince his

his day have died upon the point of the ſame weapon. It is therefore wholeſome advice that is given us, [Pſal. xxxiv. 12.] 'What man is he that deſireth life, and lov-'eth many days, that he may ſee good? keep thy tongue 'from evil, and thy lips from ſpeaking guile.' And the more evil the times are, the ſtricter guard we ſhould keep upon our lips. 'It is an evil time, the prudent will 'keep ſilence, [Amos v. 13.] When wicked men watch to make a man an 'offender for a word,' as it is, Iſa. xxix. 20, 21. it behoves us to be upon our watch, that we offend not with our lips. It is good to keep what is not ſafe to truſt. David was as a deaf and dumb man, when in the company of wicked men, [Pſal. xxxviii. 13.] he thought ſilence then to be his prudence. It is better they ſhould call you fools, than find you ſo.

Inf. 5. Employ not that breath to the diſhonour of God, which was firſt given, and is ſtill graciouſly maintained by him, for your comfort and good.

It were better you had never breathed at all, than to ſpend your breath in profane oaths, or fooliſh and idle chat, whereby at once you wound the name of God, draw guilt upon your own ſouls, and help on the ruin of others. That is a ſtartling text, [Matt. xii. 36.] 'But I ſay unto you, that every idle word that men ſhall 'ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of 'judgement.' To give an account is here, by a metalepſis of the antecedent for the conſequent, put for puniſhment in hell-fire, without an intervening change of heart, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus.

And there is more evil in this abuſe of our breath, than we can eaſily diſcern, eſpecially upon two accounts, (1.) Becauſe it is a ſin moſt frequently committed, and ſeldom repented of. The intercourſe betwixt the heart and tongue is quick, and the ſenſe of the evil as eaſily and quickly paſſeth away. (2.) Becauſe the poiſonous and malignant influence thereof abides and continues long after: our words may miſchief others, not only a long time after they are ſpoken, but a long time after the tongue that ſpake them is turned to duſt. How many

years may a fooliſh or filthy word, a profane ſcoff, an atheiſtical expreſſion, ſtick in the minds of them that heard them, after the ſpeaker's death! A word ſpoken is phyſically tranſient, and paſt away with the breath that delivered it; but it is morally permanent; for as to its moral efficacy, no more is required, but its objective exiſtence in the minds and thoughts of them that once heard it; and upon that very ground Suarez argues for a general judgement, after men have paſſed at death their particular judgement; becauſe (ſaith he) long after that, abundance of good and evil will be done in this world by the dead, in the perſons of others that overlive them. For look, as it was ſaid of Abel, that being dead, he yet ſpeaketh; ſo it may be ſaid of Julian, Porphry, and multitudes of ſcoffing atheiſts, that being dead, they yet ſpeak. O therefore get a ſanctified heart to ſeaſon your breath, that it may miniſter grace to the hearers!

Inf. 6. Let your breath promote the ſpiritual life of others, as well as maintain the natural life in yourſelves.

Though the maintaining of your natural life be one end why God gave you breath, yet it is not the only or principal end of it. Your breath muſt be food to others, as well as life to you: [Prov. x. 21.] 'The lips 'of the righteous feed many.' It will be comfortable to reſign that breath to God at death, which hath been inſtrumental to his glory in this life. It was no low encomium Chriſt gave of the church, when he ſaid, [Cant. iv. 11.] 'Thy lips, O my ſpouſe, drop as the honey-'comb, honey and milk are under thy tongue.' Sweet, wholeſome, and pleaſing words drop from her lips. They drop, ſaith Chriſt, 'as the honeycomb.' Some drops ever and anon fall actually, and others hang at the ſame time prepared and ready to fall. Such a prepared and habitual diſpoſition ſhould every Chriſtian continually have. Your words may ſtick upon men's hearts to their edification and ſalvation, when you are in your graves. Your tongues may now ſow that precious ſeed, which may ſpring up to the praiſe of God, though you may not live

to

to reap the comfort of it in this world, [John iv. 36, 37.] It is a rich expence of your breath to bring but one ſoul to God, and yet God hath uſed the breath of one, as his inſtrument, to ſave, edify, and comfort the ſouls of thouſands, [Prov. xi. 30.] 'The fruit of the righteous 'is a tree of life; and he that winneth ſouls is wiſe.'— The good Lord make all his people wiſe in this.

Surely, whether we conſider the invaluable worth and preciouſneſs of ſouls, the benefits you have had from the breath of others yourſelves, the innate property of grace, wherever it is, to diffuſe and communicate itſelf; how ſhort a time you have to breathe, and how comfortable it will be, when you breathe your laſt, to remember how it hath been employed for God: all this ſhould open your lips to counſel, reprove, and comfort others, as often as opportunity is miniſtered.

Did Chriſt ſpend his blood for our ſouls, and ſhall not we ſpend our breath for them? O let our lips diſpenſe knowledge! If you will not ſpend your breath for God, how will you ſpend your blood for him? If you will not ſpeak for him, I doubt you will not die for him.— Away with a ſullen reſervedneſs, away with unprofitable chat; all ſubjects of diſcourſe are not fit for a Chriſtian's lips. It is a grave admonition God once gave his people, by the pen of a faithful Mr. Weſt, "You may rue the opportunities you have loſt. Here lay a poor wretch with one foot in hell, would he not have ſtarted back if he had had light to diſcover his danger? Well, you are now together, ſomething you muſt ſay; the ſame breath would ſerve for a compaſſionate admonition, as for a complacent impertinency, which will redound to neither of your advantages. You part, the man dies, and in the midſt of hell cries out againſt you, One word of yours might have ſaved me; you had me in your reach, you might have told me my danger; you forbare, I hardened. The Lord reward your negligence."

Inf. 7. If breath be the tie betwixt ſoul and body, how are we concerned to improve and draw forth the

precious breath of miniſters and Chriſtians whilſt it is yet in their noſtrils!

The breath of many miniſters is judicially ſtopped already, their breath ſerves to little other uſe than to preſerve their own lives: it will be ſtopped ere long by death, and then thoſe excellent treaſures of gifts and graces, wherewith they are richly furniſhed, will be gone out of your reach, never to be farther uſeful to your ſouls. You ſhould do by them, therefore, (as one aptly ſpeaks) as ſcholars do by ſome choice book they have borrowed, and muſt return in a few days to its owner: they diligently read it night and day, and carefully tranſcribe the moſt uſeful and excellent notes they can find in it, that they may make them their own, when the book is called for out of their hands. But alas! we rather divert than draw forth theſe excellencies that are in them. You may yet converſe with them, and greatly benefit yourſelves by theſe converſes; but (as one ſpeaks) by the ſtream of your impertinent talk, that ſeaſon is neglected: afterwards you ſee your lack of knowledge, but then the inſtrument is removed. How muſt it gall an awakened Jew to think what diſcourſe he had with Jeſus Chriſt? 'Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæſar? Why do not 'thy diſciples faſt?' O! had I nothing elſe to inquire of the Lord Jeſus? Would it not have been more pertinent to have aſked, What ſhall I do to be ſaved? But he is gone, and I dead in my ſins. How many perſons have we ſent away, that had a word of wiſdom in their hearts, having only learned from them what o'clock it is, what weather, or what news; forgetting to aſk our own hearts what is all this to us, and to inquire of them things worthy of their wiſdom and experience? 'Wherefore is 'there a price in the hand of a fool, ſeeing he hath no 'heart to it?' [Prov. xvii. 16.] The expence of one minute's breath in ſeaſon may, if God concur with it, be to you the ground of breathing forth praiſes to God to all eternity.

Inf. 8. Are ſouls and bodies tacked together by ſo frail a thing as a puff of breath? How vain and groundleſs

leſs then are all thoſe pleaſures men take in their carnal projects and deſigns in this world!

We lay the plot and deſign of our future earthly felicity in our own thoughts, we mould and contrive a deſign for a long and pleaſant life. The model for raiſing an eſtate is already formed in our thoughts, and we have not patience to defer our pleaſure till the accompliſhment of it, but preſently draw a train of pleaſing conſequents from this chimera, and our thoughts can ſtoop to nothing leſs than ſitting down all the remainder of our days in the very lap of delight and pleaſure; forgetting that our breath is all the while in our noſtrils, and may expire the next moment; and if it do, the ſtructure of all our expectations and projects comes to nothing in the ſame moment. 'His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his 'duſt; and in that very day his thoughts periſh,' [Pſal. cxlvi. 4.] The whole frame of his thoughts falls inſtantly abroad, by drawing out this one pin, his breath. It is good with all our earthly deſigns, to mingle the ſerious thoughts of the dominion of Providence, and our frailty, [James iv. 15.] 'If the Lord will,' &c. It is become a common obſervation, that as ſoon as men have accompliſhed their earthly deſigns, and begin to hug and bleſs themſelves in their own acquiſitions, a ſudden and unexpected period is put both to their lives and pleaſures, [Luke xii. 19, 20.—Dan. iv. 30.] O then drive moderately, you will be at the end of all theſe things ſooner than you imagine. We need not victual a ſhip to croſs the channel, as they do that are bound to the Indies.—'What is your life? It is even a vapour, which appear-'eth for a little while, and then vaniſheth away,' [James iv. 14.]. In one moment the projects of many years are overturned for ever.

Inf. 9. Is it but a puff of breath that holds man in life? Then build not too much hope and confidence upon any man.

Build not too high upon ſo feeble a foundation. 'Ceaſe 'ye from man (ſaith the prophet) whoſe breath is in his 'noſtrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of? [Iſa. ii

22.] There are two things that ſhould deter us from dependence upon any man, viz. his falſeneſs, and his frailty. Grace in a great meaſure may cure the firſt, but not the laſt. The beſt of men muſt die, as well as the worſt, [Rom. viii. 10.] It is a vanity therefore to rely upon any man. It was the ſaying of a philoſopher, when he heard how merchants loſt great eſtates at ſea in a moment, "I love not that happineſs which hangs upon a rope." But all the happineſs of many men hangs upon a far weaker thing than a rope, even the periſhing breath of a creature.

Let not parents raiſe their hopes too high, or lean too hard upon their children: ſay not of thy child as Lamech did of Noah, 'This ſon ſhall comfort us,' [Gen. v. 29.] The world is full of the lamentations and bitter cries of diſappointed parents. Let not the wife depend too much on her huſband, as if her earthly comforts were ſecured in him againſt all danger. God is often provoked to ſtop our friends breath, that thereby he may ſtop our way to ſin, [I. Tim. v. 5.] The truſt and dependence of a ſoul is too weighty to be hung upon ſuch a weak and rotten pin as a creature's breath is.

Inf. 10. To conclude, if this frail breath be all that makes the difference between the living and the dead, then fear not man whoſe breath is in his noſtrils. There is as little ground for our fear of man, as there is for our truſt in man. As death in a moment can make the beſt man uſeleſs, and put him out of capacity to do us any good; ſo it can in a moment make the worſt man harmleſs, and put him out of a capacity to do us any injury. Indeed, if the breath of our enemies were in their power, and ours at their mercy, there would be juſt cauſe to tremble at them; but they are neither maſters of their own or ours. 'Who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of 'a man that ſhall die?' ſaid God to Jacob, [Iſa. li. 12.] The breath of the mightieſt is no better ſecured than of the meaneſt, nor never in more danger to be ſtopped, than when they breathe out threatenings againſt the upright.

Julian's

Julian's breath was ſoon ſtopped after he threatened to root out the Galileans. Queen Mary reſigned her breath at the very time when ſhe had filled the priſons with many of Chriſt's ſheep, deſigned for the ſlaughter. Read Iſa. xvii. 12. and ſee what muſhrooms we are afraid of. The beſt way to continue your relations and friends to your comfort is to give God, and not them, your dependence; and the beſt way to ſecure yourſelves againſt the rage of enemies, is to give God your fear, and not them. And thus much of the nature of the ſoul, and its tie with the body.

REVELATIONS vi. 9, 10, 11.

And when he had opened the fifth ſeal, I ſaw under the altar the ſouls of them that were ſlain for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held.

And they cried with a loud voice, ſaying, How long, O Lord! holy and true, doſt thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

And white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was ſaid unto them, That they ſhould reſt yet for a little ſeaſon, until their fellow-ſervants alſo, and their brethren, that ſhould be killed as they were, ſhould be fulfilled.

HAVING from the former text ſpoken of the nature of the ſoul, and the tie betwixt it and the body; I ſhall from this ſcripture evince the immortality of the ſoul, which is a chief part of its excellency and glory; and in this ſcripture it hath a firm foundation.

This book of the Revelation completes and ſeals up the whole ſacred canon, [Rev. xxii. 18.] It alſo comprehends all the great and ſignal events of Providence, relating either to the Chriſtian church, or to its antichriſtian enemies, in the ſeveral periods of time, to the end of the world.

world, [chap. i. 19.] all which the Spirit of God diſcovers to us in the opening of the ſeven ſeals, the ſounding of the ſeven trumpets, and the pouring out of the ſeven phials.—The firſt five ſeals expreſs the ſtate of the church under the bloody perſecuting heathen emperors.

The firſt ſeal opened, [ver. 2.] gives the church a very encouraging and comfortable proſpect of the victories, ſucceſſes, and triumphs of Chriſt, notwithſtanding the rage, ſubtlety, and power of all its enemies. He ſhall ride on conquering and to conquer, and his arrows ſhall be ſharp in the hearts of his enemies, whereby the people ſhall fall under him: and his cheering proſpect was no more than was needful. For, ſeal 2. The ſecond ſeal opened, [ver. 3, 4.] repreſents the firſt bloody perſecution of the church under Nero, whom Tertullian calls dedicator damnationis noſtræ: he that condemned Chriſtians to the ſlaughter. And the perſecution under him is ſet forth by the type of a red horſe, and a great ſword in the hand of him that rode thereon. His cruelty is by Paul compared to the mouth of a lion, [II. Tim. iv. 17.] Paul, Peter, Bartholomew, Barnabas, Mark, are all ſaid to die by his cruel hand; and ſo fierce was his rage againſt the Chriſtians, that at that time, as Euſebius ſaith, a man might ſee cities lie full of dead bodies, the old and young, men and women caſt out naked, without any reſerve of perſon and ſex, in the open ſtreet. And when the day failed, Chriſtians (ſaith Tacitus) were burnt in the night inſtead of torches, to give them light in the ſtreets. The third ſeal opened, [ver. 5, 6.] ſets forth the calamities which ſhould befall the church by famine; yet not ſo much a literal as a figurative famine, as Durham expounds it, like that mentioned, [Amos viii. 11, 12.] which fell out under Maximinus and Trajan. The former directing the perſecution eſpecially againſt miniſters, in which many bright lamps were extinguiſhed. The latter expreſſly condemned all Chriſtian meetings and aſſemblies by a law. The type by which this perſecution was ſet forth, is a black horſe. A gloomy and diſmal day it was indeed to the poor ſaints, when they ate the bread of their ſouls

as

as it were by weight; for he that ſat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. Then did John hear this ſad voice, 'A meaſure of wheat for a penny, and three-mea-'ſures of barley for a penny.' That quantity was but the ordinary allowance to keep a man alive for a day; and a Roman penny was the ordinary wages given for a day's work to a labourer. The meaning is, that in thoſe days all the ſpiritual food of men ſhould keep their ſouls alive from day to day, with all their travail and labour, ſhould be but ſufficient for that end. The forth ſeal opened, [ver. 7, 8.] repreſents a much more ſad and doleful ſtate of the church; for under it are found all the former ſufferings, with ſome new kinds of trouble ſuperadded. Under this ſeal death rides upon the pale horſe, and hell or the grave follows him. It is conceived to point at the perſecution under Diocleſian, when the church was mowed down as a meadow. The fifth ſeal is opened in my text, under which the Lord Jeſus repreſents to his ſervant John the ſtate and condition of thoſe precious ſouls which had been torn and ſeparated from their bodies by the bloody hands of tyrants, for his name ſake, under all the former perſecutions. The deſign whereof is to ſupport and encourage all that were to come after in the ſame bloody path. I ſaw under the altar, &c. In which we have an account, 1. Of what John ſaw. 2. Of what he heard.

1. We have an account of what he ſaw; 'I ſaw the 'ſouls of them that were ſlain for the word of God, 'and for the teſtimony which they held.'

Souls in this place are not put for the blood, or the dead carcaſſes of the ſaints, who were ſlain, as ſome have groundleſly imagined; but are to be underſtood properly and ſtrictly from thoſe ſpiritual and immortal ſubſtances, which once had a vital union with their bodies, but were now ſeparated from them by a violent death; yet ſtill retained a love and inclination to them, even in the ſtate of ſeparation; and are therefore here brought in complaining of the ſhedding of their blood, and deſtruction of their bodies.

Theſe ſouls (even of all that died for Chriſt, from Abel to that time) John ſaw, that is, in ſpirit; for theſe immaterial ſubſtances are not perceptible by the groſs external ſenſes. He had the priviledge and favour of a ſpiritual repreſentation of them, being therein extraordinarily aſſiſted, as Paul was when his ſoul was wrapt into the third heaven, and heard things unutterable, [II. Cor. xii. 2.] God gave him a tranſient viſible repreſentation of thoſe holy ſouls, and that under the altar: he means not any material altar, as that at Jeruſalem was; but as the holy place figured heaven, ſo the altar figured Jeſus Chriſt, [Heb. xiii. 10.] And moſt aptly Chriſt is repreſented to John in this figure, and ſouls of the martyrs at the foot or baſis of this altar; thereby to inform us, 1ſt. That however men look upon the death of thoſe perſons, and though they kill their names by ſlanders, as well as their perſons by the ſword; yet in God's account they die as ſacrifices, and their blood is no other than a drink offering poured out to God, which he highly prizeth, and graciouſly accepteth. Suitable whereunto Paul's expreſſion is, [Phil. ii. 17.] 2dly. That the value and acceptation their death and blood ſhed hath with God, is through Chriſt, and upon his account; for it is the altar which ſanctifieth the gift, [Matt. xxiii. 19.] And, 3dly. It informs us, that theſe holy ſouls, now in a ſtate of ſeparation from their bodies, were very near to Jeſus Chriſt in heaven. They lay as it were at his foot.

Once more, they are here deſcribed to us by the cauſe of their ſufferings and death in this world, and that was, for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held; *i. e.* they died in the defence of the truths, or will of God revealed in his word, againſt the corruptions, oppoſitions, and innovations of men. As one of the martyrs that held up the Bible at the ſtake, ſaying, This is it that hath brought me hither. They died not as malefactors, but as witneſſes: they gave a threefold teſtimony to the truth, a lip teſtimony, a life teſtimony, and a blood teſtimony; whilſt the hypocrite gives but two, and many Chriſtians but two. Thus we have an account of what John ſaw.

2. Next

2. Next he tells us what he heard, and that was, (1.) A vehement cry from thoſe ſouls to God. (2.) A gracious anſwer from God to them.

(1.) The cry which they uttered with a loud voice was this, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, doſt thou 'not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth!' A cry like that from the blood of Abel. Yet let it be remembered, (1.) This cry doth not imply theſe holy ſouls to be in a reſtleſs ſtate, or to want true ſatisfaction and repoſe out of the body; nor yet, (2.) That they carried with them to heaven any malevolent or revengeful diſpoſition; but that which is principally ſignified by this cry, is their vehement deſire after the abolition of the kingdom of Satan, and the completion and conſummation of Chriſt's kingdom in this world: that thoſe his enemies which oppoſe his kingdom by ſlaying his ſaints, may be made his footſtool; which is the ſame thing Chriſt waits for in glory, [Heb. x. 13.]

(2.) Here we find God's gracious anſwer to the cry of theſe ſouls, in which he ſpeaks ſatisfaction to them two ways: 1. By ſomewhat given them for preſent. 2. By ſomewhat promiſed them hereafter. 1. That which he gives them in hand; white robes were given to every one of them. It is generally agreed, that theſe white robes given them denote heavenly glory, the ſame which is promiſed to all ſincere and faithful ones, who preſerve themſelves pure from the corruptions and defilements of the world, [Rev. iii. 4.] And it is as much as if God ſhould have ſaid to them, although the time be not come to ſatisfy your deſires in the final ruin and overthrow of Satan's tyrannical kingdom in the world, and Chriſt's conſummate conqueſt of all his enemies, yet it ſhall be well with you in the mean time; you ſhall walk with me in white, and enjoy your glory in heaven. 2. And this is not all, but the very thing they cry for, ſhall be given them alſo after a little ſeaſon; q. d. wait but a little while, till the reſt that are to follow in the ſame ſuffering path, be got through the Red Sea of martyrdom,

tyrdom, as you are, and then you ſhall ſee the foot of Chriſt upon the necks of all his enemies, and juſtice ſhall fully avenge the precious innocent blood of all the ſaints, which in all ages hath been ſhed for my ſake; from the blood of Abel to the laſt that ſhall ever ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake in the world. From all which this concluſion is moſt fair and obvious:

Doct. That the ſouls of men periſh not with their bodies, but do certainly over-live them, and ſubſiſt in a ſtate of ſeparation from them. [Matt. x. 28.] 'Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able 'to kill the ſoul.'

The bodies of theſe martyrs of Jeſus were deſtroyed by divers ſorts of torments, but their ſouls were out of the reach of all thoſe cruel engines; they were in ſafety under the altar, and in glory, cloathed with their white robes, when the bodies they lately inhabited on earth were turned to aſhes, and torn to pieces by wild beaſts.

The point I am to diſcourſe from this ſcripture, is the immortality of the ſoul. For the better underſtanding whereof, let it be noted that there is a twofold immortality:

I. Simple and abſolute in its own nature.

II. Derived, dependent, and from the pleaſure of God.

In the former ſenſe, God only hath immortality, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, [I. Tim. vi. 16.] our ſouls have it as a gift from him. He that created our ſouls out of nothing, can, if he pleaſe, reduce them to nothing again; but he hath beſtowed immortality upon them, and produced them in a nature ſuitable to that his appointment, fitted for an everlaſting life. So that though God by his abſolute power can, yet he never will annihilate them, but they ſhall and muſt live for ever in endleſs bleſſedneſs or miſery; death muſt deſtroy theſe mortal bodies, but it cannot deſtroy our ſouls. And the certainty of this aſſertion is grounded upon theſe reaſons, and will be cleared by theſe following arguments:

I. The firſt argument for proof of the ſoul's immortality may be taken from the ſimplicity, ſpirituality, and uncom-

uncompoundedneſs of its nature. It is a pure, ſimple, unmixed being. Death is the diſſolution of things compounded; where therefore no compoſition or mixture is found, no death or diſſolution can follow.

Death is the great divider, but it is of things that are diviſible. The more ſimple, pure, and refined any material thing is, by ſo much the more permanent and durable it is found to be. The nearer it approacheth to the nature of ſpirit, the farther it is removed from the power of death: but that which is not material, or mixed at all, is wholly exempt from the ſtroke and power of death. It is from the contrariant qualities and jarring humours in mixed bodies, that they come under the law and power of diſſolution. Matter and mixture are the doors at which death enters naturally upon the creatures.

But the ſoul of man is a ſimple, ſpiritual, immaterial, and unmixed being, not compounded of matter and form, as other creatures are, but void of matter, and altogether ſpiritual; as may appear in the vaſt capacity of its underſtanding faculty, which cannot be ſtraitened by receiving multitudes of truths into it. It need not empty itſelf of what it had received before, to make way for more truth; nor doth it find itſelf clogged or burdened by the greateſt multitudes or varieties of truths; but the more it knows, the more it ſtill deſires to know. Its capacity and appetite are found to enlarge themſelves according to the increaſe of knowledge. So that to ſpeak as the matter is, if the knowledge of all arts, ſciences, and myſteries of nature could be gathered into the mind of one man; yet that mind would thirſt, and even burn with deſire after more knowledge, and find more room for it than it did when it firſt ſipped and reliſhed the ſweetneſs of truth. Knowledge, as knowledge, never burdens or cloys the mind; but like fire increaſes and enlarges, as it finds more matter to work upon. Now this never could be, if the ſoul were a material being. Take the largeſt veſſel, and you ſhall find that the more you pour into it, the leſs room is ſtill left for more; and when it

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is full, you cannot pour in one drop more, except you let out what was in it before. But the ſoul is no ſuch veſſel, it can retain all it had, and be ſtill receptive of more; ſo that nothing can fill it, and ſatisfy it, but that which is infinite and perfect.

The natural appetite after food is ſometimes ſharp and eager, but then there is a ſtint and meaſure, beyond which it craves not; but the appetite of the mind is more eager and unlimited; it never ſaith, till it come to reſt in God, it is enough, becauſe the faculty which produceth it, is more active, ſpiritual, and immaterial. All matter hath its limits, bounds, and juſt meaſures, beyond which it cannot be extended. But the ſoul is boundleſs, and its appetites infinite; there is no end of deſiring, till we attain the deſired end, which is God, God alone being its adequate object, which plainly proves it to be a ſpiritual, immaterial, and ſimple being. And being ſo, two things neceſſarily follow therefrom: 1. That it is void of any principle of corruption in itſelf. 2. That it is not liable to any ſtroke of death by any adverſe power without itſelf.

1. It cannot be liable to death from any ſeeds or principles of corruption within itſelf; for where there is no compoſition, there is no diſſolution: the ſpirituality and ſimplicity of the ſoul admits of no corruption. 2. Nor is it liable to death by any adverſe power without itſelf; no ſword can touch it, no inſtrument of death can reach it; it is above the reach of all adverſaries, [Matt. x. 28.] 'Fear not them that kill the body, but cannot kill the 'ſoul.' The bounds and limits of creature-power are here fixed by Jeſus Chriſt, beyond which they cannot go. They can wound, torment, and deſtroy the body, when God permits them; but the ſoul is out of their reach. A ſword can no more wound it than it can wound or hurt the light; and conſequently it is, and muſt needs be of an immortal nature.

Object. But there ſeems to be a decay upon our ſouls in our old age, and decays argue and imply corruption, and are ſo many ſteps and tendencies towards the death

and diſſolution thereof. The experience of the whole world ſhews us how the apprehenſions, judgements, wit, and memory of old men fail, even to that degree, that they become children again in reſpect of the abilities of their minds: their ſouls only ſerving, as it were, to ſalt their bodies, and keep them from putrefaction for a few days longer.

Sol. It is a great miſtake, there is not the leaſt decay upon the ſoul, no time makes any change upon the eſſence of the ſoul: all the alteration that is made, is upon the organs and inſtruments of the body, which decay in time, and become inapt and unſerviceable to the ſoul. The ſoul, like an expert and ſkilful muſician, is as able as ever it was; but the body its inſtrument is out of tune: and the ableſt artiſt can make no pleaſing melody upon an inſtrument whoſe ſtrings are broken, or ſo relaxed that they cannot be ſcrewed up to their due height. Let Hippocrates the prince of phyſicians decide this matter for us: "The ſoul (ſaith he) cannot be changed or altered as to its eſſence by the acceſs of meat or drink, or any other thing whatſoever; but all the alterations that are made, muſt be referred either to the ſpirits with which it mixeth itſelf, or to the veſſels and organs through which it ſtreameth." So that this proves not its corruptibility, and being neither corruptible in itſelf, nor vulnerable by any creature without itſelf, ſeeing man cannot, and God will not deſtroy it. The concluſion is ſtrongly inferred, that therefore it is immortal.

II. The immortality of the ſouls of men may be concluded from the promiſes of everlaſting bleſſedneſs, and the threatenings of everlaſting miſeries, reſpectively made in the ſcriptures of truth, to the godly and ungodly, after this life; which promiſes and threatenings had been altogether vain and deluſory, if our ſouls periſh with our bodies.

1. God has made many everlaſting promiſes of bleſſedneſs, yea, he hath eſtabliſhed an everlaſting covenant betwixt himſelf and the ſouls of the righteous, promiſing

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to be their God for ever, and to beſtow endleſs bleſſedneſs upon them in the world to come. Such a promiſe is that, John viii. 28. 'I give unto them eternal life, 'and they ſhall never periſh.' And John vi. 14. 'Whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall 'never thirſt; but the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall 'be in him a well of water, ſpringing up into everlaſting life.' And again, John xi. 26. 'Whoſoever 'liveth and believeth in me, ſhall never die.' And once more, Rom. ii. 7. 'To them who by patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for glory, and honour, and 'immortality, eternal life.' With multitudes more of like nature. Now if theſe be no vain and deluſory promiſes, (as to be ſure they are not, being the words of the true and faithful God) then thoſe ſouls to whom they are made, muſt live for ever: for if the ſubject of the promiſes fail, conſequently the performance of the promiſes muſt fail too. For how ſhall they be made good, when thoſe to whom they are made, are periſhed?

Let it not be objected here, that the bodies of believers are concerned in the promiſes, as well as their ſouls, and yet their bodies periſh notwithſtanding. For though their bodies die, yet they ſhall live again, and enjoy the fruit of the promiſes in eternal glory: and whilſt their bodies lye in the grave, their ſouls are with God, enjoying the covenanted bleſſedneſs in heaven, [Rom. viii. 10, 11.] and ſo the covenant-bond is not looſed betwixt them and God, by death, which it muſt needs be, in caſe the ſoul periſhed when the body doth. And upon this hypotheſis that argument of Chriſt is built, Mat. xxii. 32. proving the reſurrection from the covenant God made with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob; I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; q. d. if Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, be periſhed in ſoul as well as in body, how then is God their God? What is become of the promiſe and covenant-relation? For if one correlate fail, the relation neceſſarily fails with it. If God be their God, then certainly they are

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in being; for God is not the God of the dead, i. e. of thoſe that are utterly periſhed. Therefore it muſt needs be, that though their bodies be naturally dead, yet their ſouls ſtill live; and their bodies muſt live again at the reſurrection, by virtue of the ſame promiſe.

2. On the contrary, many threatenings of eternal miſery after this life are found in the ſcriptures of truth againſt ungodly and wicked perſons. Such is that in II. Theſ. i. 7—9. 'The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from 'heaven in flaming fire, to render vengeance on them 'that know not God, and that obey not the goſpel of 'our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall be puniſhed with ever-'laſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and 'the glory of his power.' And ſpeaking of the torments of the damned, Chriſt thus expreſſeth the miſery of ſuch wretched ſouls in hell, [Mark xi. 44.] 'Where their worm 'dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.' But how ſhall the wicked be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, if their ſouls have not an everlaſting duration? Or how can it be ſaid, that their worm (viz. the remorſe and anguiſh of their conſciences) dieth not, if their ſouls die? Puniſhment can endure no longer than its ſubject endureth. If the being of the ſoul ceaſe, its pains and puniſhments muſt have an end.

You ſee, then, there are everlaſting promiſes and threatenings to be fulfilled, both upon the godly and ungodly. 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlaſting 'life; and he that believeth not the Son ſhall not ſee life, 'but the wrath of God abideth on him,' [John iii. 36.] The believer ſhall never ſee ſpiritual death, viz. The ſeparation of his ſoul from God; and the unbeliever ſhall never ſee life, viz. the bleſſed fruition of God; but the wrath of God ſhall abide on him. If wrath muſt abide on him, he muſt abide alſo as the wretched ſubject thereof, which is another argument of the immortality of ſouls.

III. The immortality of the ſoul is a truth aſſerted and atteſted by the univerſal conſent of all nations and ages of the world. "We give much (ſaith Seneca) to

the preſumption of all men," and that juſtly; for it would be hard to think that an error ſhould obtain the general conſent of mankind, or that God would ſuffer all the world, in all ages of it, to bow down under an univerſal deception.

This doctrine ſticks cloſe to the nature of man; it ſprings up eaſily, and without force from his conſcience. It hath been allowed as an unqueſtionable thing, not only among Chriſtians, who have the oracles of God to teach and confirm this doctrine, but among heathens alſo, who had no other light but that of nature to guide them into the knowledge and belief of it. Learned Zanchius cites out of Cicero an excellent paſſage to this purpoſe: "In every thing (ſaith he) the conſent of all nations is to be accounted the law of nature;" and therefore with all good men it ſhould be inſtead of a thouſand demonſtrations: and to reſiſt it (as he there adds) what is it, but to reſiſt the voice of God? And how much more, when with this conſent the word of God doth alſo conſent? As for the conſent of nations in this point, the learned author laſt mentioned hath induſtriouſly gathered many great and famous teſtimonies from the ancient Chaldeans, Grecians, Pythagoreans, Stoicks, Platoniſts, &c. which evidently ſhew they made no doubt of the immortality of their ſouls. How plain is that of Phocylides? ſpeaking of the ſoul, in oppoſition to the body, which muſt be reſolved into duſt, he ſaith, "but for the ſoul, that is immortal, and never grows old, but lives for ever." And Triſmegiſtus, the famous and celebrated philoſopher, gives this account of man, that he conſiſts of two parts, being mortal in reſpect of his body, but immortal in reſpect of his ſoul, which is his beſt and principal part. Plato not only aſſerts the immortality of the ſouls of men, but diſputes for it, and among other arguments urges this; "That if it were not ſo, wicked men would certainly have the advantage of righteous and good men; who, after they have committed all manner of evils, ſhould ſuffer none." But what ſpeak I of philoſophers? The moſt barbarous nations in the world conſtantly believe it; the Turks acknow-

acknowledge it in their Alcoran; and though they groſſly miſtake the nature of heaven, in fancying it to be a paradiſe of ſenſual pleaſures, as well as the way thither, by their impoſtor Mahomet; yet it is plain they believe the ſoul's immortality, and that it lives in pain or pleaſure after this life. The very ſavage and illiterate Indians are ſo fully perſuaded of the ſoul's immortality, that wives caſt themſelves cheerfully into the flames to attend the ſouls of their huſbands; and ſubjects, to attend the ſouls of their kings into the other world. Two things are objected againſt this argument: 1. That ſome particular perſons have denied this doctrine, as Epicurus, &c. and by argument maintained the contrary. To which I anſwer, that though they have done ſo, yet, (1.) this no way ſhakes the argument from the conſent of nations, becauſe ſome few perſons have denied it: we truly ſay the earth is ſpherical, though there be many hills and riſings in it. If Democritus put out his own eyes, muſt we therefore ſay all the world is blind? (2.) It is worth thinking on, whether they that have queſtioned the immortality of the ſoul, have not rather made it the matter of their option and deſire than of their faith and perſuaſion. We diſtinguiſh Atheiſts into three claſſes, ſuch as are ſo in practice, in deſire, or in judgement; but of the former ſorts there may be found multitudes to one that is ſo in his ſettled judgement. If you think it ſtrange that any man ſhould wiſh his ſoul to be mortal, Hierocles gives us the true reaſon of it: "A wicked man is afraid of his judge, and therefore wiſhes his ſoul and body may periſh together by death, rather than it ſhould come to God's tribunal."

2. Nor can the ſtrength of the argument be eluded by ſaying, all this may be an univerſal tradition, one nation receiving it from another. For as this is neither true in itſelf, nor poſſible to be made good; ſo if it were, it would not invalidate the argument; for if it were not a truth agreeable to the light of nature, and ſo eaſily received by all men upon the propoſal of it, it were im-

poſſible that all nations in the world ſhould embrace it ſo readily, and hold it ſo tenaciouſly as they do.

IV. The immortality of the ſoul may be evinced from the everlaſting habits which are ſubjected and inherent in it. If theſe habits abide for ever, certainly ſo muſt the ſouls in which they are planted.

The ſouls of good men are the good ground, in which the ſeed of grace is ſown by the Spirit, [Matt. xiii. 23.] i. e. the ſubjects in which gracious properties and affections inhere and dwell, (which is the formal notion of a ſubſtance) and theſe implanted graces are everlaſting things. So John iv. 14. 'It ſhall be in him a well 'of water, ſpringing up into everlaſting life,' i. e. the graces of the Spirit ſhall be in believers permanent habits, fixed principles, which ſhall never decay. And therefore that ſeed of grace which is caſt into their ſouls at their regeneration, is in I. Pet. i. 23. called incorruptible ſeed, which liveth and abideth for ever: and it is incorruptible, not only conſidered abſtractly, in its own ſimple nature, but concretely, as it is in the ſanctified ſoul, its ſubject: for it is ſaid, [I. John iii. 9.] 'The 'ſeed of God remaineth in him.' It abideth for ever in the ſoul. If then theſe two things be clear to us, viz. 1. that the habits of grace be everlaſting; 2. that they are inſeparable from ſanctified ſouls; it muſt needs follow that the ſoul, their ſubject, is ſo too, an everlaſting and immortal ſoul. And how plainly do both theſe propoſitions lie before us in the ſcriptures? As for the immortal and interminable nature of ſaving grace, it is plain to him that conſiders not only what the fore-cited ſcriptures ſpeak about it, calling it incorruptible ſeed, a well of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life: but add to theſe what is ſaid of theſe divine qualities, in II. Pet. i. 4. where they are called the divine nature; and Eph. iv. 18. The life of God, noting the perpetuity of theſe principles in believers, as well as their reſemblance of God in holineſs, who are endowed with them.

I know it is a great queſtion among divines, whether theſe principles of grace in the regenerate be everlaſting

and interminable in their own nature and eſſence? For my own part I think that God is naturally, eſſentially, and abſolutely interminable and immortal. But theſe gracious habits, planted by him in the ſoul, are ſo by virtue of God's appointment, promiſe, and covenant. And ſure it is that by reaſon hereof they are interminate, which is enough for my purpoſe, if they be not eſſentially interminable. Though grace be but a creature, and therefore hath a *poſſe mori*, yet it is a creature begotten by the word and ſpirit of God, which live and abide for ever, and a creature within the promiſe and covenant of God, by reaſon whereof it can never actually die.

And then as for the inſeparableneſs of theſe graces from the ſouls in whom they are planted, how clear is this from I. John ii. 27. where ſanctifying grace is compared to an unction, and this unction is ſaid to abide in them? And I. John iii. 9. it is called the ſeed of God, which remaineth in the ſoul. All our natural and moral excellencies and endowments go away when we die; [Job iv. 21.] Doth not their excellency that is in them go away? Men may outlive their acquired gifts, but not their ſupernatural graces: theſe ſtick by the ſoul, as Ruth to Noami, and where it goes, they go too; ſo that when the ſoul is diſlodged by death, all its graces aſcend up with it into glory: it carries away all its faith, love, delight in God, all its comfortable experiences, and fruits of communion with God, along with it to heaven. For death is ſo far from diveſting the ſoul of its graces, that it perfects in a moment all that was defective in them; [I. Cor. xiii. 10.] 'When that which is perfect ſhall 'come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away,' as the twilight is done away when the ſun is up, and at its zenith. So then, grace never dieth; and this never-dying grace is inſeparable from its ſubject; by which it is plain to him that conſiders, that as graces, ſo ſouls abide for ever.

Object. But this only proves the immortality of regenerate ſouls. Sol. It doth ſo; but then conſider, as there be gracious habits in the regenerate that never die,

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ſo there are vicious habits in the unregenerate, that can never be ſeparated from them in the world to come. Hence, John viii. 21. they are ſaid to die in their ſins; and [Job xx. 11.] 'Their iniquities lie down 'with them in the duſt;' and [Ezek. xxiv. 13.] 'They 'ſhall never be purged.' Remarkable is that place, [Rev. xxii. 11.] 'Let him that is filthy, be filthy ſtill.' And if guilt ſticks ſo faſt, and ſin be ſo deeply engraven in impenitent ſouls, they alſo muſt remain for ever, to bear the puniſhment of them.

V. The immortality of the ſoul of man may be evinced from the dignity of man above all other creatures, (angels only excepted) and his dominion over them all.

In this the ſcriptures are clear, that man is the maſterpiece of all God's other works, [Pſal. viii. 5, 6.] 'For 'thou haſt made him a little lower than the angels, and 'haſt crowned him with glory and honour. Thou haſt 'made him to have dominion over the works of thy 'hands, thou haſt put all things under his feet.' Other creatures were made for his ſervice, and he is crowned king over them all. One man is of more worth than all the inferior creatures.—But wherein is his dignity and excellency above all other creatures, if not in reſpect of the capacity and immortality of his ſoul? Sure it can be found no where elſe; for as to the body, many of the creatures excel man in the perfections of ſenſe, greatneſs of ſtrength, agility of members, &c. And for beauty, Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the lilies of the field. The beaſts and fowls enjoy more pleaſure, and live diveſted of thoſe cares which perplex and wear out the lives of men. It cannot be in reſpect of bodily perfections or pleaſures that man excels other creatures—If you ſay, he excels them all in reſpect of that noble endowment of reaſon, which is peculiar to man, and his ſingular excellency above them all.—It is true, this is his glory; but if you deprive the reaſonable ſoul of immortality, you deſpoil it of all, both its glory and comfort, and put the reaſonable into a worſe condition than the unreaſonable and brutiſh creatures: for if the

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ſoul may die with the body, and man periſh as the beaſts, happier is the life of the beaſt, which is perplexed with no cares nor fears about futurities; our reaſon ſerves to little other purpoſe, but to be an engine of torture, a mere rack to our ſouls.

Certainly the privilege of man doth not conſiſt in that, as abſtracted from immortality. But in this it properly conſiſts, that he enjoys not only a reaſonable, but alſo rejoiceth in an immortal ſoul, which ſhall overlive the world, and ſubſiſt ſeparate from the body, and abide for ever, when all other ſouls, being but material forms, periſh with that matter on which they depend. This is the proper dignity of man above the beaſt that periſheth; and to deprive him of immortality, and leave him his reaſon, is but to leave him a more miſerable and wretched creature than any that God hath put under his feet. For man is a proſpecting creature, and raiſeth up to himſelf vaſt hopes and fears from the world to come: by theſe he is reſtrained from the ſenſual pleaſures which other creatures freely enjoy, and exerciſed with ten thouſand cares which they are unacquainted with; and to fail at laſt of all his hopes and expectations of happineſs in the world to come, is to fall many degrees lower than the loweſt creature ſhall fall; even ſo much lower, as his expectations and hopes had lifted him higher.

VI. The ſouls of men muſt be immortal, or elſe the deſires of immortality are planted in their ſouls in vain.

That there are deſires of immortality found in the hearts of all men, is a truth too evident to be denied or doubted. (F) Man cannot bound and terminate his deſires within the narrow limits of this world, and the time that meaſures it. Nothing that can be meaſured by time,

(F) I beſeech men for God's ſake, that if at any time there ariſe in them a deſire, or a wiſh that others ſhould ſpeak well of their death; then at that time they would ſeriouſly conſider whether thoſe motions are not from ſome ſpirit to continue a ſpirit after it leaves its earthly habitation, rather than from an earthly ſpirit, a vapour which cannot act, or imagine, or deſire, or fear things beyond its continuance. [HALE de Anim. page 73.]

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is commenſurate to the deſires of man's ſoul. No motto better ſuits it than this, 'I ſeek for that which will not 'die,' [Rom. ii. 7.] And his great relief againſt death lies in this, *Non omnis moriar*; 'That he ſhall not totally 'periſh.' Yea, we find in all men, even in thoſe that ſeem to be moſt drowned and loſt in the loves and delights of this preſent world, a natural deſire to continue their names and memories to poſterity after death. Hence it is ſaid, [Pſal. xlix. 11.] 'Their inward thought is, that their 'houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places 'to all generations; they call their lands after their own 'names.' And hence is the deſire of children, which is, as one ſaith, a knotty eternity; when our thread is ſpun out, and cut off, their thread is knit to it; and ſo we dream of a continued ſucceſſion in our name and family.

Abſalom had no children to continue his memory, to ſupply which defect, he reared up a pillar. [II. Sam. xviii. 18.] Now it cannot be imagined that God ſhould plant the deſire of immortality in thoſe ſouls that are incapable of it; nor yet can we give a rational account how theſe apprehenſions of immortality ſhould come into the ſouls of men, except they themſelves be of an immortal nature. For, either theſe notions and apprehenſions of immortality are impreſt upon our ſouls by God, or do naturally ſpring out of the ſouls of men: if God impreſs them, thoſe impreſſions are made in vain, if there be no ſuch thing as immortality to be enjoyed; and if they ſpring and riſe naturally out of our ſouls, that is a ſufficient evidence of their immortality. For we can no more conceive and form to ourſelves ideas and notions of immortality, if our ſouls be mortal, than the brutes, which are void of reaſon, can form to themſelves notions and conceptions of rationality. So then the very apprehenſions and deſires that are found in men's hearts of immortality, do plainly ſpeak them to be of an immortal nature.

VII. Moreover, the account given us in ſcripture of the return of ſeveral ſouls into their own bodies again after death, and real ſeparation from them, ſhews us, that the

the ſoul ſubſiſts and lives in a ſeparate ſtate after death, and periſheth not by the ſtroke of death: for if it were annihilated or deſtroyed by death, the ſame ſoul could never be reſtored again to the ſame body. A dead body may indeed be actuated by an aſſiſting form, which may move and carry it from place to place. So the devil hath actuated the dead bodies of many; but they cannot be ſaid to live again by their own ſouls, after a real ſeparation by death, unleſs thoſe ſouls over-lived the bodies they forſook at death, and had their abode in another place and ſtate. You have divers unqueſtionable examples of the ſoul's return into the body recorded in ſcripture: as that of the Shunamite's ſon, in II. Kings iv. 18—37.; that of the ruler's daughter, Matt. ix. 18—25.; that of the widow's ſon, Luke vii. 12—15.; and that of Lazarus, John xi. 39—45. Theſe were no other but the very ſame ſouls, their own ſouls which returned into them again; which, as Chryſoſtom well obſerves, is a great proof of their immortality, againſt them that think the ſoul is annihilated after the death of the body.

It is true the ſcripture gives us no account of any ſenſe or apprehenſion they retained after their re-union, of the place or ſtate they were during their ſeparation. There ſeemed to be a perfect forgetfulneſs of all that they ſaw or felt in the ſtate of ſeparation. And indeed it was neceſſary it ſhould be ſo, that our faith might be built rather upon the ſure promiſes of God, than ſuch reports and narratives of them that came to us from the dead, [Luke xiv. 31.] And if we believe not the word, neither would we believe 'if one came from the dead.'

VIII. Moreover, eighthly, the ſuppoſition of the ſoul's periſhing with the body is ſubverſive of the Chriſtian religion in the principal doctrines and duties thereof: take away the immortality of the ſoul, and all religion falls to the ground. I will inſtance in, 1. The doctrines, —2. The duties of religion.

Firſt, It overthrows the main principles and doctrines of the Chriſtian religion, upon which both our faith and comfort is founded; and conſequently it undoes and ruins

us, as to all ſolid hope and true joy. The doctrines or principles it overthrows are, among many others, ſuch as follow:

1. It nullifies and makes void the great deſign and end of God's eternal election. The ſcriptures tell us, that from eternity God hath choſen a certain number in Chriſt Jeſus, to eternal life, and to the mean by which they ſhall attain it, out of his mere good pleaſure, and for the praiſe of his grace. This was, (1.) an eternal act of God, [Epheſ. i. 4.] long before we had our being, [Rom. ix. 11.] (2.) This choice of God, or his purpoſe to ſave ſome, is immutable, [II. Tim. ii. 19.—James i. 17.] (3.) This choice he made in Chriſt, [Epheſ. i. 4.] Not that Chriſt is the cauſe of God's chuſing us; for we were not elected, becauſe we were, but that we might be in Chriſt. Chriſt was ordained to be the medium of the execution of this decree; and all the mercies which were propoſed and ordained for us, were to be purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt. He was not the cauſe of the decree, but the purchaſer of the mercies decreed for us. (4.) This choice was of a certain number of perſons, who are all known to God, [II. Tim. ii. 19.] and all given to Chriſt in the covenant of redemption, [John xvii. 2, 6.] So that no elect perſon can be a reprobate, no reprobate an elect perſon. (5.) This number was choſen to ſalvation, [I. Theſſ. v. 9.] No leſs did God deſign for them than glory and happineſs, and that for ever. (6.) The ſame perſons that are appointed to ſalvation are the end, are alſo appointed to ſanctification as the way and means by which they ſhall attain that end, [I. Pet. i. 1, 2.—II. Theſſ. ii. 13, 14.] (7.) The impulſive cauſe of this choice was the mere good pleaſure of his will, [II. Tim. i. 9.—Rom. ix. 15, 16.—Epheſ. i. 9.] (8.) The end of all this is, the praiſe of his glorious grace, [Epheſ. i. 5, 6.] to make a glorious manifeſtation of the riches of his grace for ever. This is the account the ſcripture gives us of God's eternal choice.

But if our ſouls be mortal, and periſh with our bodies, all this is a miſtake, and we are impoſed upon, and our under-

underſtandings abuſed by this doctrine. For to what purpoſe are all theſe decrees and contrivances of God from everlaſting, if our ſouls periſh with our bodies? Certainly, if it be ſo, he loſes all the thoughts and counſels of his heart about us; and that counſel of his will, which is ſo much celebrated in the ſcriptures, and admired by his people, comes to nought. For this is evident to every man's conſideration, that if the ſoul (which is the object about which all thoſe counſels and thoughts of God were employed and laid out) fail in its being, all thoſe thoughts and counſels that have been employed about it, and ſpent on it, muſt neceſſarily fail, and come to nothing with it. The thoughts of his heart cannot ſtand faſt, as it is ſaid, Pſal. xxxiii. 11. if the ſoul ſlide, about which they are converſant. In that day the elect ſoul periſheth, the eternal conſultations and purpoſes of God's heart periſh with it. Kekerman tells us that Albertus Magnus, with abundance of art, and the ſtudy of thirty years, made a vocal ſtatue in the form of a man. It was a rare contrivance, and much admired. The cunning artiſt had ſo framed it, that by wheels and other machines placed within it, it could pronounce words articulately. Aquinas being ſurprized to hear the ſtatue ſpeak, was affrighted at it, and brake it all to pieces; upon which Albertus told him, he had at one blow deſtroyed the work of thirty years. Such a blow would the death of the ſoul give to the counſels and thoughts, not of man, but of God, not of thirty years, but from everlaſting. If the ſouls of men periſh at death, either God never did appoint any ſouls to ſalvation, as the ſcriptures teſtify he did, [I. Theſſ. v. 9.] or elſe the foundation of God ſtands not ſure, as his word tells us it doth, [II. Tim. ii. 19.] So then this ſuppoſition overturns the eternal decrees and counſels of God, which is the firſt thing.

2. It overthrows the covenant of redemption betwixt the Father and the Son, before this world was made.—There was a fœderal tranſaction betwixt the Father and Son from eternity about our ſalvation, [II. Tim. i. 9.—Zech. vi. 13.] In that covenant Chriſt engaged to redeem the elect by his blood. And the Father promi

him a reward of thoſe his ſufferings, [Iſa. lvii. 12.]—Accordingly he hath poured out his ſoul to death for them, finiſhed the work, [John xvii. 4.] and is now in heaven, expecting the full reward and fruits of his ſufferings, which conſiſt not in his own perſonal glory, which he there enjoys, but in the completeneſs and fullneſs of his myſtical body, [John xvii. 24.] But certainly, if our ſouls periſh with our bodies, Chriſt hath a very bad bargain of it; nor can that promiſe be ever made good to him; [Iſa. liii. 12.] 'He ſhall ſee of the 'travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied.' He hath done his work, but where is his reward? See how this ſuppoſition ſtrikes at the juſtice of God, and wounds his faithfulneſs in his covenant with his Son. He hath as much comfort and reward from the travail of his ſoul, as a mother that is delivered after many ſharp pangs of a child, that dies almoſt as ſoon as born.

3. It overthrows the doctrines of Chriſt's incarnation, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, and interceſſion in heaven for us. And theſe are the main pillars both of our faith and comfort; take away theſe, and take away our lives too, for theſe are the ſprings of all joy and comfort to the people of God, [Rom. viii. 34.] His incarnation was neceſſary to capacitate him for his mediatorial work. It was not only a part of it, but ſuch a part, without which he could diſcharge no other part of it.—This was the wonder of men and angels, [I. Tim. iii. 16.] A God incarnate is the world's wonder. No condeſcenſion like this, [Phil. ii. 6, 7.] The death of Chriſt hath the nature and reſpect of a ranſom, or equivalent price laid down to the juſtice of God for our redemption, [Mat. xx. 28.—Acts xx. 28.] It brought our ſouls from under the curſe, and purchaſed for them everlaſting bleſſedneſs, [Gal. iv. 4, 5.] The reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead hath the nature both of a teſtimony of his finiſhing the work of our redemption, and the Father's full ſatisfaction therein, [John vi. 10.] and of a principle of our reſurrection to eternal life, [I. Cor. xv. 20.] The aſcenſion of Chriſt into heaven was in the capacity

pacity and relation of a forerunner, [Heb. vi. 20.] It was to prepare places for the redeemed, who were to come after him to glory in their ſeveral generations, [John xiv. 2, 3.] The interceſſion of Chriſt in heaven is for the ſecurity of our purchaſed inheritance to us, and to prevent any new breaches which might be made by our ſins, whereby it might be forfeited, and we diveſted of it again, [I. John ii. 1, 2.] All theſe jointly make up the foundation of our faith and hope of glory. But if our ſouls periſh, or be annihilated at death, our faith, hope, and comforts are all deluſions, vain dreams, which do but amuſe our fond imaginations. For,

(1.) It was not worth ſo great a ſtoop and abaſement of the bleſſed God, as he ſubmitted to in his incarnation, when he appeared in fleſh; yea, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, [Rom. viii. 3.] and made himſelf of no reputation, [Phil. ii. 7.] An act that is and ever will be admired by men and angels: I ſay, it was not worth ſo great a miracle as this, to procure for us the vaniſhing comfort of a few years, and that ſhort-lived comfort, no other than a deluding dream, or mocking phantaſm; for ſeeing it conſiſts in hope and expectation from the world to come, as the ſcriptures every where ſpeak, [I. Theſſ. v. 8. and II. Cor. iii. 12.—Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.] if there be no ſuch enjoyments for us there (as moſt certainly there are not, if our ſouls periſh) it is but a vanity, a thing of nought, that was the errand upon which the Son of God came from the Father's boſom to procure for us. (2.) And for what think you was the blood of God upon the croſs? What was ſo vaſt and inconceivable a treaſure expended to purchaſe? What! the flattering and vain hopes of a few years, of which we may ſay as it was ſaid of the Roman conſulſhip, the fugitive joy of a year; yea, not only ſhort-lived and vain hopes in themſelves, but ſuch, for the ſake whereof we abridge ourſelves of the pleaſures and deſires of the fleſh, [I. John iii. 3.] and ſubmit ourſelves to the greateſt ſufferings in the world, [Rom. viii. 18.] 'For the hope of Iſrael am I bound with this chain,' &c. [Acts xxviii. 20.] Was this the purchaſe of his blood?

blood? Was this it for which he ſweat, and groaned, and bled, and died? Was that precious blood no more worth than ſuch a trifle as this? (3.) To what purpoſe did Chriſt riſe again from the dead? Was it not to be the firſt fruits of them that ſleep? Did he not riſe as the common head of believers, to give us aſſurance we ſhall not periſh, and be utterly loſt in the grave? [Col. i. 18.] But if our ſouls periſh at death, there can be no reſurrection; and if none, then Chriſt died and roſe in vain, we are yet in our ſins, and all thoſe abſurdities are unavoidable, with which the apoſtle loads this ſuppoſition, [I. Cor. xv. 13, &c.] (4.) And to as little purpoſe was his triumphant aſcenſion into heaven, if we can have no benefit by it. The profeſſed end of his aſcenſion was to prepare a place for us, [John xiv. 2.] But to what purpoſe are thoſe manſions in the heavens prepared, if the inhabitants for whom they are prepared be utterly loſt? And why is he called the forerunner, if there be none to follow him, as ſurely there are not, if our ſouls periſh with our bodies? Thoſe heavenly manſions, that city prepared by God, muſt ſtand void for ever, if this be ſo. (5.) To conclude, in vain is the interceſſion of Chriſt in heaven for us, if this be ſo. They that ſhall never come thither, have no buſineſs there to be tranſacted by their advocate for them. So that the whole doctrine of redemption by Chriſt is utterly ſubverted by this one ſuppoſition.

4. As it ſubverts the doctrine of redemption by Chriſt, and all the hopes and comforts we build thereon, ſo it utterly deſtroys all the works of the Spirit upon the hearts of believers, and makes them vaniſh into nothing. There are divers acts and offices of the Spirit of God about and upon our ſouls: I will only ſingle out three, viz. his ſanctifying, ſealing, and comforting work; all things of great weight with believers.

(1.) His ſanctifying work, whereby he alters the frames and tempers of our ſouls, [II. Cor. v. 17.] old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new. The declared and direct end of this work of the Spirit upon our

ſouls

ſouls is, to attemper and diſpoſe them for heaven, [Col. i. 12.] For ſeeing nothing that is unclean can enter into the holy place, [Rev. xxi. 27.] 'and without holineſs 'no man ſhall ſee the Lord,' [Heb. xii. 14.] it is neceſſary that all thoſe that have this hope in them, ſhould expect to be partakers of their hopes in the way of purification, [I. John iii. 3.] And this is the ground upon which the people of God do mortify their luſts, and take ſo much pains with their own hearts, [Matt. xviii. 8.] counting it better, (as the Lord tells them) to enter into life halt or maimed, than having two eyes, or hands, to be caſt into hell. But to what purpoſe is all this ſelf denial, all theſe heart ſearchings, heart humblings, cries and tears upon the account of ſin, and for an heart ſuited to the will of God, if there be no ſuch life to be enjoyed with God after this animal life is finiſhed?

Object. If you ſay there is a preſent advantage reſulting to us in this world, from our abſtinence and ſelf denial, we have the true and longer enjoyments of our comforts on earth by it. Debauchery and licentiouſneſs do not only flat the appetite, and debaſe and alloy the comforts of this world, but cut ſhort our lives by the exorbitances and abuſes of them. Sol. Though there be a truth in this worth our noting, yet, (1.) Morality could not have done all this without ſanctification, there was no need for the pouring out of the Spirit, for ſo low a uſe and purpoſe as this. (2.) And therefore as the wiſdom of God would be cenſured and impeached, in ſending his Spirit for an end, which could as well be attained without it, ſo the veracity of God muſt needs be affronted by it, who, as you heard before, hath declared our ſalvation to be the end of our ſanctification.

(2.) His ſealing, witneſſing, and aſſuring work. We have a full account in the ſcripture of theſe offices and works of the Spirit, and ſome ſpiritual ſenſe and feeling of them upon their own hearts, which are two good aſſurances that there are ſuch things as his bearing witneſs with our ſpirits, [Rom. viii. 16.] his ſealing us to the day of redemption, [Eph. iv. 30.] his earneſts given into

our

our hearts, [II. Cor. i. 22.] All which acts and works of the Spirit have a direct and clear aſpect upon the life to come, and the happineſs of our ſouls in the full enjoyment of God to eternity; for it is to that life we are now ſealed; and of thee full ſum of that glory that theſe are the pledges and earneſts of. But if our ſouls periſh by death, theſe witneſſes of the Spirit are deluſions, and his earneſts are given us but in jeſt.

(3.) His comforting work is a ſweet fruit and effect ſenſibly felt and taſted by believers in this world. He is from his office ſtiled the comforter, [John xvi. 7.] He ſo comforts, as no other doth or can. And what is the matter of his comforts, but the bleſſedneſs to come, the joys of the coming world? [John xvi. 13.] 'Eye hath not ſeen,' &c. Upon the account of theſe unſeen things he enableth believers to glory in tribulation, [Rom. v. 4.] to deſpiſe preſent things, whether the ſmiles or the frowns of the world, [Heb. xi. 24—26.] But if the being of our ſouls fail at death, theſe are but the fantaſtic joys of men in a dream, and the experiences of all God's people are found but ſo many fond conceits and groſs miſtakes.

5. This ſuppoſition overthrows the doctrine of the reſurrection, which is the conſolation of Chriſtians. We believe according to the ſcripture, That after death hath divorced our ſouls and bodies for a time, they ſhall meet again, and be re-united; and that the joy at their reunion will be to all that are in Chriſt greater than the ſorrows they felt at parting. This ſeems not incredible to us, whatever natural improbabilities and carnal reaſons may be againſt it, [Acts xxvi. 8.] and that becauſe the almighty power, which is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf, undertakes this taſk, [Phil. iii. 21.] We believe this very ſame numerical body ſhall riſe again, [Job xxi. 27.] by the return of the ſame ſoul into it, which now dwelleth in it; and that we ſhall be the ſame perſons that now we are; the remunerative juſtice of God requiring it to be ſo. We believe the ſouls of the righteous ſhall be much better accommodated, and have a more comfortable habitation in their bodies, than now they have, [I.

Cor. xv. 42, 43.] ſeeing they ſhall be made like unto Chriſt's glorious body, [Phil. iii. 21.] and that then we ſhall live after the manner of angels, [Luke xx. 36.] without the neceſſities of this animal life. Theſe are the things we look for according to promiſe; and this expectation is our great relief againſt, (1.) the fears of death, [I. Cor. xv. 55.] (2.) againſt the death of our friends and relations, [I. Theſ. iv. 14.] (3.) againſt all the preſſures and afflictions of this life, [Job xix. 25—27.] but if the being of our ſouls fail at death, all hopes and comforts from the reſurrection fail with it; for it is not imaginable that the body ſhould riſe till it be revived, but by the re-union of the ſoul with it: and if it be not the ſame ſoul that now inhabits it, we cannot be the ſame perſons in the reſurrection we are now; and conſequently, this ſuppoſition ſubverts not only the doctrine for the reſurrection, but,

6. It overthrows alſo the faith of the judgement to come. For if the ſoul periſh, the body cannot riſe; or if it riſe by a new created ſoul, the perſon raiſed is another, and not the ſame that lived and died in this world; and conſequently, the rewards and puniſhments to be beſtowed and awarded to all men in that day, cannot be juſt and equal: for we believe, according to the ſcriptures, that,—(1.) The actions which men perform in this life, are not tranſient, but are filled to the account in the world to come; [Gal. vi. 7.] 'Here we ſow and there we reap.' Actions done in this world are two ways conſiderable, viz. Phyſically, or morally; in the firſt conſideration they are tranſient, in the laſt permanent and everlaſting. A word is ſpoken, or an act done, in a moment; but though it be paſt and gone, and perhaps be by us quite forgotten, God regiſters it in his book, in order to the day of account. (2.) We believe that God hath appointed a day in which all men ſhall appear before his judgement ſeat, to give an account of all they have done in the body, whether it be good or evil, [II. Cor. v. 10.] (3.) And that in order hereunto, the very ſame perſons ſhall be reſtored by the reſurrection, and appear before God the

very ſame bodies and ſouls which did good or evil in this world. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? juſtice requires that the rewards and puniſhments be then diſtributed to the ſame perſons that did good or evil in this world; which ſtrongly infers the immortality of the ſoul, and that it certainly overlives the body, and muſt come back from the reſpective places of their abode, to be again united to them, in order to their great account.

By all which you ſee the cleareſt proof of the ſoul's immortality, and how the contrary ſuppoſition overthrows our faith, duties, and comforts. Yet all this, notwithſtanding, how apt we are to ſuſpect this doctrine, and remain ſtill diſſatisfied and doubting about it, when all is ſaid? which comes to paſs partly from, (1.) The ſubtlety of Satan, who knows he can never perſuade men to live the life of beaſts, till he firſt perſuade them to think they ſhall die as the beaſts do. (2.) And partly from the influence of ſenſe and reaſon upon us, whereby we do too much ſuffer ourſelves to be ſwayed and impoſed upon in matters of greateſt moment in religion. For theſe being proper arbiters and judges in other matters within their ſphere, they are arrogant, and we eaſy enough to admit them to be arbiters alſo in things that are quite above them. Hence come ſuch plauſible objections; as,

Obj. 1. The ſoul ſeems to vaniſh and die when it leaves the body; for when it hath ſtruggled as long as it can to keep its poſſeſſion in the body, and at laſt is forced to depart, we can perceive nothing but a puff of breath, which immediately vaniſhes into air, and is loſt. Sol. We cannot perceive, therefore it is nothing but what we do and can perceive, viz. a puff of vaniſhing breath. By this argument the being of the ſoul in the body is as queſtionable as after its departure out of the body; for we cannot diſcern it by ſight in the body: yea, by this argument we may as well deny the exiſtence of God and angels, as of ſouls; for it is a ſpiritual and inviſible being, as they are; our groſs ſenſes are incapable of diſcerning ſpirits, which are immaterial and inviſible ſubſtances.

Object.

Object. 2. But you allow the ſoul to have a riſe and beginning, it is not eternal, and it is certain, whatever had a beginning muſt have an end. Sol. Every thing which had a beginning may have an end, and what once was nothing, may, by the power that created it, be reduced to nothing again. But though we allow it may be ſo by the abſolute power of God, we deny the conſequence that therefore it ſhall and muſt be ſo. Angels had a beginning, but ſhall never have an end. And indeed their immortality, as well as ours, flows not ſo much from the nature of either, as from the will and pleaſure of God who hath appointed them to be ſo. He can, but never will, annihilate them.

Object. 3. But the ſouls depend upon matter in all its operations, nothing is in the underſtanding which was not in the ſenſes; it uſeth the natural ſpirits as its ſervants and tools in all its operations, and therefore how can it either ſubſiſt or act in a ſtate of ſeparation?—Sol. 1. The hypotheſis is not only uncertain, but certainly falſe. There are acts performed by the ſoul, even whilſt it is in the body, wherein it makes no uſe at all of the body. Such are the acts of ſelf-tuition and ſelf-reflection: And what will you ſay of its acts in raptures and ecſtaſies, ſuch as that of Paul, [II. Cor. xii. 2.] and John, [Rev. xxi. 10.] what uſe did their ſouls make of the bodily ſenſes of natural ſpirits then?—Sol. 2. And though in its ordinary actions in this life it doth uſe the body as its tool or inſtrument in working, doth it thence follow that it can neither ſubſiſt or act ſeparate from them in the other world? Whilſt a man is on horſeback in his journey, he uſeth the help and ſervice of his horſe, and is moved according to the motion of his horſe; but doth it thence follow he cannot ſtand or walk alone when diſmounted at his journey's end? We know angels both live and act without the miniſtry of bodies, and our ſouls are ſpiritual ſubſtances as well as they.

Object. 4. But many ſcriptures ſeem to favour the total ceſſation of the ſoul's actions, if not of its being alſo after ſeparation, as that in II. Sam. xiv. 14. We

muſt needs die, and are as water ſpilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up; and Pſal. lxxxviii. 10, 11, 12. with Iſaiah xxxviii. 18, 19. The dead cannot praiſe thee. Sol. Thoſe words of the woman of Tekoa are not to be underſtood abſolutely, but reſpectively: and the meaning is, that the ſoul is in the body as ſome precious liquor in a brittle glaſs, which being broken by death, the ſoul is irrecoverably gone, as the water ſpilt on the ground, which by no human power or art of man can be recovered again. All the means in the world cannot fetch it back into the body again. She ſpeaks not of the reſurrection, or what ſhall be done in the world to come by the almighty power of God, but of what is impoſſible to be done in this world by all the ſkill and power of man. And for the expreſſions of Heman and Hezekiah, they only reſpect and relate to thoſe ſervices their ſouls were now employed about for the praiſe of God, with reſpect to the converſion or edification of others, as Pſal. xxx. 8, 9. or at moſt, to that mediate ſervice and worſhip which they give God, in and by their attendance upon his ordinances in this world, and not of that immediate ſervice and praiſe that is performed and given him in heaven by the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; ſuch was the ſweetneſs they had found in theſe ordinances and duties, that they expreſs themſelves as loth to leave them. The ſame anſwer ſolves alſo the objections grounded upon other miſtaken ſcriptures, as that Pſal. lxxviii. 39. where man is called a wind that paſſeth away, and cometh not again. It is only expreſſive of the frailty and vanity of the preſent animal life we live in this world, to which we ſhall return no more after death; it denies not life to departed ſouls, but the end of this animal life is death; the life we live in the other world is of a different nature.

Inf. 1. Is the ſoul immortal? Then it is impſſible for ſouls to find full reſt and contentment in any enjoyments on this ſide heaven. All temporary things are inadequate, and therefore unſatisfying to our ſouls. What gives the ſoul reſt and ſatisfaction, muſt be as durable as the ſoul is; for if we could poſſibly find in this

this world a condition and ſtate of things moſt agreeable in all other reſpects to our deſires and wiſhes, yet if the ſoul be conſcious to itſelf, that it ſhall and muſt overlive and leave them all behind it, it can never reach true contentment in the greateſt affluence and confluence of them. Man being an immortal, is therefore a proſpecting creature, and can never be ſatisfied with this, that it is well with him at preſent, except he can be ſatisfied that it ſhall be ſo for ever. The thoughts of leaving our delightful and pleaſant enjoyments, imbitters them all to us whilſt we have them. All outward things are continually paſſing away as the waters, [I. Cor. vii. 31.] Riches are uncertain, [I. Tim. vi. 17.] 'They fly away 'as an eagle towards heaven, and with wings of their 'own making,' [Prov. xxiii. 5.] i. e. as the feathers that enable a bird to fly from us, grow out of his own ſubſtance, ſo doth that vanity that carries away all earthly enjoyments. This alone would ſpoil all contentment.

Inf. 2. Then ſee the ground and reaſon of Satan's envy and enmity againſt the ſoul, and his reſtleſs deſigns and endeavours to deſtroy it. It grates that ſpirit of envy, to find himſelf, who is by nature immortal, ſunk everlaſtingly and irrecoverably into miſery, and the ſouls of men appointed to fill up thoſe vacant places in heaven from which the angels fell. No creature but man is envied by Satan, and the ſoul of man much more than his body: it is true, he afflicts the bodies of men when God permits him, but he ever aims at the ſoul when he wounds the body, [Heb. x. 37.] This roaring lion is continually going about, 'ſeeking whom he may devour,' [I. Pet. v. 8.] It is the precious ſoul he hunts after; that is the bit he gapes for, as the wolf tears the fleece to come at the fleſh. All the pleaſure thoſe miſerable creatures find, is the ſucceſs of their temptations upon the ſouls of men. It is a kind of delight to them to plunge ſouls into the ſame condemnation and miſery with themſelves. This is the trade they have been driving ever ſince their fall. By deſtroying ſouls, he at once exerciſes his revenge againſt God, and his envy againſt man,

man, which is all the relief his miſerable condition allows him.

Inf. 3. Do the ſouls of men overlive their bodies? Then it is the height of madneſs and ſpiritual infatuation, to deſtroy the ſoul for the body's ſake; to caſt away an immortal ſoul for the gratification of periſhing fleſh; to ruin the precious ſoul for ever, for the pleaſures of ſin which are but for a moment: yet this is the madneſs of millions of men. They will drown their own ſouls into everlaſting perdition, to procure unneceſſary things for the body, [I. Tim. vi. 2.] 'They that will be rich, &c.' Every cheat and circumvention in dealing, every lie, every act of oppreſſion, is a wound given the immortal ſoul for the procuring ſome accommodations to the body. O what ſoul-undoing bargains do ſome make with the devil! Some ſell their ſouls outright for the gratification of their luſts, [I. Kings xxi. 20.] Many pawn their ſouls to Satan in a conditional bargain; ſo do all that venture upon ſin, upon a preſumption of pardon and repentance. The devil is a great trader for ſouls; he hath all ſorts of commodities to ſuit all men's humours that will deal with him. He hath profits for the covetous, honours for the ambitious, pleaſures for the voluptuous; but a ſoul is the price at which he ſells them; only, he will be content to ſell at a day, and not require preſent pay; ſo that it be paid on a death-bed, in a dying hour, he is ſatisfied.—But O what an undoing bargain do ſinners make, to part with a treaſure for a trifle; [Matt. xvi. 26.] the precious ſoul for ever, 'for the pleaſures of ſin, which are but for 'a ſeaſon!' [Heb. xi. 25.] We are charmed with the preſent pleaſure and ſweetneſs there is in ſin; but how bitter will the after-fruits be? See Prov. xx. 17—32. —Job xx. 12, 13.—James i. 15. You will ſay hereafter as Jonathan did, [I. Sam. xiv. 31.] I taſted but a little honey, and I muſt die.

Inf. 4. Then the expoſing of the body to danger, yea, to certain deſtruction, for the preſervation of the ſoul, is the dictate of ſpiritual wiſdom, and that which every Chriſtian is bound to chuſe and practiſe, when both intereſts

reſts come in full oppoſition, [Heb. xi. 35.—Dan. iii. 28.—Rev. xii. 11.] No promiſes of preferment, no threats of torments, have been able to prevail with the people of God to give the leaſt wound, or do the leaſt wrong to their own ſouls. When Secundus was commanded to deliver his Bible, he anſwered, I am a Chriſtian, I will not deliver it; then they deſired him but to deliver a chip, a ſtraw, any thing that came to his hand in lieu of it: he refuſed to redeem his life by delivering the leaſt trifle on that account to ſave it.

That is a great word of our Lord's, [Luke ix. 24.] 'He that will ſave his life ſhall loſe it; and he that loſeth 'it for my ſake ſhall find it.' Chriſtians, this is your duty and wiſdom, and muſt be your reſolution and practice in the day of temptation, to yield your bodies to preſerve your ſouls, as we offer our arm to defend the head. O better thy body had never been given thee, than that it ſhould be a ſnare to thy ſoul, and the inſtrument of caſting it away for ever! O how dear are ſome perſons like to pay for their tenderneſs and indulgence to the fleſh when the hour of temptation ſhall come! Mortify your irregular affections to the body, and never hazard your precious immortal ſouls for their ſakes. It is the character of an hypocrite to chuſe ſin rather than affliction, [Job xxxvi. 21.] But if ever thou haſt been in the deeps of ſpiritual troubles for ſin, if God have opened thine eyes to ſee the evil of ſin, the immenſe weight and value of thy ſoul, and of eternity, 'Thou wilt not count thy 'life dear to thee to finiſh thy courſe with joy,' [Acts xx. 24.]

Inf. 5. If the ſoul be an immortal being that ſhall have no end, then it is the great concern of all men to ſtrive to the utmoſt for the ſalvation of their ſouls, whatever become of all leſſer temporary intereſts in this world, [Luke xiii. 24.] There is a gate (i. e.) and introductive means of life and ſalvation; this gate is ſtrait, (i. e.) there are a world of difficulties to be encountered in the way of ſalvation: but he that values and loves his never-dying ſoul, muſt and will be diligent and conſtant in the uſe

of all thoſe means that have a tendency to ſalvation, be they never ſo difficult or unpleaſant to fleſh and blood.—There be difficulties from within ourſelves, ſuch as mortification, ſelf-denial, contempt of the world, parting with all at the call of Chriſt; and difficulties from without, the reproaches, perſecutions, and ſufferings for Chriſt, which would not be ſo great as they are, were it not for our unmortified luſts within; but be they what they will, we are bound to ſtrive through them all for the ſalvation of our precious and immortal ſouls.

(1.) For it is the greateſt concernment of the ſoul, yea, of our own ſouls; we are bound to do much for the ſaving of another's ſoul, [II. Tim. ii. 10.] much more for our own; this is our darling, [Pſal. xxii.] our only one. (2.) Others have done and ſuffered much for the ſaving of their ſouls; and are not ours, or ought they not to be as dear to us, as the ſouls of any others have been to them? [Matt. xxi. 32.] (3.) The utmoſt diligence is little enough to ſave them. Do all that you can do, and ſuffer all that you can ſuffer, and deny yourſelves as deeply as ever any did, yet you ſhall find all this little enough to ſecure them, [I. Pet. iv. 18.] The righteous themſelves are ſcarcely ſaved, [I. Cor. ix. 24.] (4.) The time to ſtrive for ſalvation is very ſhort and uncertain, [Luke xiii. 25.—John xii. 35.] It will be to no purpoſe when the ſeaſons and opportunities of ſalvation are once over. There is no ſtriving in hell, a death-pang of deſpair hath ſeized them, hope is extinguiſhed, and endeavours fail. (5.) Doth not reaſon dictate and direct you to do now, whilſt you are in the way, as you will wiſh you had done, and repent with rage and ſelf-indignation becauſe you did it not, when you come to the end, and behold the final iſſues of things? Suppoſe but thyſelf now either, (1.) Upon a death-bed launching into eternity. (2.) Or at the bar of Chriſt. (3.) Or in view of heaven. (4.) Or in the ſight and hearing of the damned; what think you, will you not then wiſh, O that I had ſpent every moment in the world, that could poſſibly be redeemed from the pure neceſſities of life, in

prayer,

prayer, in hearing, in ſtriving for ſalvation! From a proſpect of this it was, that one ſpent many hours daily on his knees to the macerating of his body; and being admoniſhed of the danger of his health, and adviſed to relax, he anſwered, I muſt die, I muſt die.

Object. 1. Do not ſay you have many incumbrances, and other employments in the world: for, (1.) One thing is neceſſary, [Luke x. 42.] Thoſe are conveniences, but this is of abſolute neceſſity. (2.) They will thrive the better for this, [Matt. vi. 33.] ſeek this, and they ſhall be added. (3.) Do but redeem the time that can be redeemed to this purpoſe, let not ſo much precious time run waſte as daily doth.

Object. 2. Say not, no man can ſave his ſoul by his own ſtriving, and therefore it is to little purpoſe; for it is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, but God that ſheweth mercy, [Rom. ix. 16.] True, this in itſelf cannot ſave you, but what then? Muſt we oppoſe thoſe things which God hath ſubordinated? Bring this home to your natural or civil actions, eating, drinking, plowing, or ſowing, and ſee how the conſequent will look.

Object. 3. Say not, it is a mercenary doctrine, and diſparages free grace; for are not all the enjoyments and comforts of this life confeſſedly from free grace, though God hath diſpenſed them to you in the way of your diligence and induſtry?

Object. 4. To conclude: Say not the difficulties of ſalvation are inſuperable; it is ſo hard to watch every motion of the heart, to deny every luſt, to reſiſt a ſuitable temptation, to ſuffer the loſs of all for Chriſt, that there is no hope for overcoming them. For, (1.) God can and doth make difficult things eaſy to his people, who work in the ſtrength of Chriſt, [Phil. iv. 13.] (2.) Theſe ſame difficulties are before all others that are before you, yet it diſcourageth not them, [Phil. iii. 11.] Others ſtrive to the uttermoſt. There are extremes found in this matter; ſome work for ſalvation, as an hireling for his wages, ſo the Papiſts; theſe diſparage grace, and cry up works. Others cry down obedience as legal, as the Antinomians,

and cry up grace to the diſparagement of duties. Avoid both theſe, and ſee that you ſtrive: but, (1.) think not heaven to be the price of your ſtriving, [Rom. iv. 3.] (2.) Strive, but not for a ſpurt; let this care and diligence run throughout your lives; whilſt you are living be you ſtill ſtriving: your ſouls are worth it, and infinitely more than all this amounts to.

Inf. 6. Doth the ſoul overlive the body, and abide for ever? Then it is a great evil and folly to be exceſſively careful for the mortal body, and neglectful of the immortal inhabitant. In a too much indulged body there ever dwells a too much neglected ſoul. The body is but a vile thing, [Phil. iii. 21.] the ſoul more valuable than the whole world, [Matt. xvi. 26.] To ſpend time, care, and pains for a vile body, whilſt little or no regard is had to the precious immortal ſoul, is an unwarrantable folly and madneſs. To have a clean and waſhed body, and a ſoul all filth; a body neatly cloathed and dreſſed, with a ſoul all naked and unready; a body fed, and a ſoul ſtarved; a body full of the creature, and a ſoul empty of Chriſt; theſe are poor ſouls indeed! We ſmile at little children, who in a kind of laborious idleneſs, take a great deal of pains to make and trim their babies, or build their little houſes of ſticks and ſtraws. And what are they but children of a bigger ſize, that keep ſuch ado about the body, a houſe of clay, a weak pile that muſt periſh in a few days? It is admirable, and very convictive of moſt Chriſtians, what we read in a heathen, "I confeſs (ſaith Seneca) there is a love to the body implanted in us all, we have the tutelage and charge of it; we may be kind and indulgent to it, but muſt not ſerve it; but he that ſerves it is a ſervant to many cares, fears, and paſſions."—Let us have a diligent care of it, yet ſo as when reaſon requires, when our dignity or faith requires it, we commit it to the fire.

It is true, the body is beloved of the ſoul, and God requires, that it moderately care for the neceſſities and conveniencies of it; but to be fond, indulgent, and conſtantly ſolicitous about it, is both the ſin and ſnare of the ſoul. One of the fathers being invited to dine with

a lady, and waiting ſome hours till ſhe was dreſt, and fit to come down; when he ſaw her, he fell a weeping; and being demanded why he wept, O, ſaith he, I am troubled that you ſhould ſpend ſo many hours this morning in pinning and trimming your body, when I have not ſpent half the time in praying, repenting, and caring for my ſoul. Two things a maſter commits to his ſervant's care, (ſaith one) the child, and the child's cloaths: it will be but a poor excuſe for the ſervant to ſay at his maſter's return, Sir, here are all the child's cloaths, neat and clean, but the child is loſt. Much ſo will be the account that many will give to God of their ſouls and bodies at the great day. Lord, here is my body, I was very careful for it, I neglected nothing that belonged to its content and welfare; but for my ſoul, that is loſt and caſt away for ever, I took little care or thought about it. It is remarkable what the apoſtle ſaith, [Rom. viii. 12.] We owe nothing to the fleſh, we are not in its debt, we have given it all, more than all that belongs to it; but we owe many an hour, many a care, many a deep thought to our ſouls, which we have defrauded it of for the vile body's ſake. You have robbed your ſouls to pay your fleſh. This is madneſs.

Inf. 7. How great a bleſſing is the goſpel, which brings life and immortality to light, the moſt deſireable mercies to immortal ſouls! This is the great benefit we receive by it, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, [II. Tim. i. 10.] 'Chriſt hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and im-'mortality to light by the goſpel.' Life and immortality is put for immortal life, the thing which all immortal ſouls deſire and long for. Theſe deſires are found in ſouls that enjoy not the goſpel light; for, as I ſaid before, they naturally ſpring out of the very nature of all immortal ſouls. But how, and where is it to be obtained; that is a ſecret, for which we are entirely beholden to the goſpel diſcovery. It lay hid in the womb of God's purpoſe, till by the light of goſpel revelation it was made manifeſt. But now all men may ſee what are the gracious thoughts and purpoſes of God concerning men, and what that is

he hath deſigned for their immortal ſouls, even an immortal life, and this life is to be obtained by Chriſt, than which no tidings can be more welcome, ſweet, or acceptable to us. O therefore ſtudy the goſpel! 'This is life 'eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus 'Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent,' [John xvii. 3.] And ſee that you prize the goſpel above all earthly treaſures. It is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation. You have two ineſtimable benefits and bleſſings by it: (1.) It manifeſts and reveals eternal life to you, which you could never have come to the knowledge of any other way; thoſe that are without it, are groping or feeling after God in the dark, [Acts xvii. 27.] Poor ſouls are conſcious to themſelves, that there is a juſt and terrible God, and that their ſins offend and provoke him; but how to atone the offended Deity they know not, [Micah vi. 6, 7.] But the way of reconciliation and life is clearly diſcovered to us by the goſpel. (2.) As it manifeſts and reveals eternal life to us, ſo it frames and moulds our hearts, as God's ſanctifying inſtrument for the enjoyment of it. It is not only the inſtrument of revelation, but of ſalvation; the word of life, as well as the word of light, [Phil. ii. 16.] It can open your hearts as well as your eyes; and is therefore to be entertained as that which is the firſt rank of bleſſings, a peerleſs and ineſtimable bleſſing.

Inf. 8. If our ſouls be immortal, certainly our enemies are not ſo formidable as we are apt by our ſinful fears to repreſent them. They may, when God permits them, deſtroy your bodies, they cannot touch or deſtroy your ſouls, [Matt. x. 28.] As to your bodies, no enemy can touch them till there be leave and permiſſion given them by God, [Job i. 10.] The bodies of the ſaints, as well as their ſouls, are within the line or hedge of Divine Providence. They are ſecurely fenced, ſometimes mediately by the miniſtry of angels, [Pſal. xxxiv. 7.] and ſometimes immediately by his own hand and power, [Zech. ii. 5.] As to their ſouls, whatever power enemies may have upon them, (when Divine permiſſion

opens

opens a gap in the hedge of Providence for them) yet they cannot reach their ſouls to hurt them or deſtroy them, but by their own conſent. They can deſtroy our periſhing fleſh, it is obnoxious to their malice and rage; they cannot reach home to the ſoul: no ſword can cut aſunder the band of union between them and Chriſt; they would be dreadful enemies indeed if they could do ſo.—Why then do we tremble and fear at this rate, as if ſoul and body were at their mercy, and in their power and hand? The ſouls of thoſe martyrs were in ſafety under the altar in heaven; they were cloathed with white robes when their bodies were given to be meat to the fowls of heaven and beaſts of the earth. The devil drives but a poor trade by the perſecution of the ſaints; he tears the neſt, but the bird eſcapes; he cracks the ſhell, but loſeth the kernel. Two things make a powerful defence againſt our fears: (1.) That all our enemies are in the hand of Providence. (2.) That all providences are ſteered by that promiſe, [Rom. viii. 28.]

Inf. 9. If ſouls be immortal, then there muſt needs be a vaſt difference betwixt the aſpects and influences of death upon the godly and ungodly. O, if ſouls would but ſeriouſly conſider what an alteration death will make upon their condition, for evil or for good; how uſeful would ſuch meditations be to them! (1.) They muſt be diſſeized and turned out of theſe houſes of clay, and live in a ſtate of ſeparation from them: of this there is an inevitable neceſſity, [Eccleſ. viii. 8.] It is vain to ſay, I am not ready; ready or unready, they muſt depart when their leaſe is out. It is as vain to ſay, I am not willing; for willing or unwilling they muſt be gone; there is no hanging back, and begging, Lord, let death take another at this time, and ſpare me; for no man dies by a proxy. (2.) The time of our ſoul's departure is at hand, [II. Pet. i. 13, 14.—Job xvi. 22.] The moſt firm and well-built body can ſtand but a few days, but our ruinous tabernacles give our ſouls warning that the day of their departure is at hand; the lamp of life is almoſt burnt down, the glaſs of time almoſt run; yet a few, a very few days

and

and nights more, and then time, nights, and days ſhall be no more. (3.) When that moſt certain and near approaching time is come, wonderful alterations will be made on the ſtate of all ſouls, godly and ungodly.

(1.) A marvellous alteration will then be made on the ſouls of the godly. For, (1.) No ſooner is the dividing ſtroke given by death, and the parting pull over, but they ſhall find themſelves in the arms of angels, mounting them through the upper regions in a few moments, far above all the aſpectable heavens, [Luke xvi. 22.] The airy region is indeed the place where devils inhabit; and have their haunts and walks; but angels are the ſaints convoy through Satan's territories from the arms of mourning friends, into the welcome arms of officious and benevolent angels. (2.) From the ſight and converſes of men, to the ſight of God, Chriſt, and the general aſſembly of bleſſed and ſinleſs ſpirits. The ſoul takes its leave of all men at death, [Iſa. xxxviii. 11.] Farewel, vain world, with all the mixed and imperfect comforts of it, and welcome the more ſweet, ſuitable and ſatisfying company of Father, Son, and Spirit, holy angels and perfected ſaints, [Heb. xii. 23.] (3.) From the bondage of corruption to perfect liberty, and everlaſting freedom; ſo much is implied, [Heb. xii. 23.] 'The 'ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.' (4.) From all fears, doubtings, and queſtionings of our conditions, and anxious debates of our title to Chriſt, to the cleareſt, fulleſt, and moſt ſatisfying aſſurance; for what a man ſees, how can he doubt of it? (5.) From all burthens of affliction, inward and outward, under which we have groaned all our days, to everlaſting reſt and eaſe, [II. Cor. v. 1, 2, 3.] O what a bleſſed change to the righteous muſt this be!

(2.) A marvellous change will alſo be then made upon the ſouls of the ungodly, who ſhall then part from, (1.) All their comforts and pleaſant enjoyments in the world, for here they had their conſolation, [Luke xvi. 25.] here was all their portion, [Pſal. xvii. 14.] and in a moment find themſelves arreſted and ſeized by Satan, as God's goaler,

goaler, hurrying them away to the priſon of hell, [I. Pet. iii. 19.] 'There to be reſerved to the judgement of the 'great day, [Jude ver. 6.] (2.) From under the means of grace, life, and ſalvation, to a ſtate perfectly void of all means, inſtruments, and opportunities of ſalvation, [John ix. 4.—Eccleſ. ix. 10.] never to hear the joyful ſound of preaching or praying any more; never to hear the wooing voice of the bleſſed bridegroom, ſaying, Come unto me, come unto me, any more. (3.) From all their vain, ungrounded, preſumptuous hopes of heaven, into abſolute and final deſperation of mercy. The very ſinews and nerves of hope are cut by death, [Prov. xiv. 32.] 'The 'wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs, but the righte-'ous hath hope of his death.' Theſe are the great and aſtoniſhing alterations that will be made upon our ſouls after they part with the bodies which they now inhabit. O that we, who cannot but be conſcious to ourſelves, that we muſt overlive our bodies, were more thoughtful of the condition they muſt enter into, after that ſeparation which is at hand!

Inf. 10. If our ſouls be immortal, then death is neither to be feared by them in heaven, nor hoped for by them in hell. The being of ſouls never fails, whether they be in a ſtate of bleſſedneſs or of miſery. 'In glory 'they are ever with the Lord, [I. Theſſ. iv. 17.] There ſhall be no death there, [Rev. xxi. 4.] and in hell, though they ſhall wiſh for death, yet death ſhall flee from them. Though there be no fears of annihilation in heaven, yet there be many vain wiſhes for it in hell, but to no purpoſe; there never will be an end put either to their being, or to their torments. In this reſpect no other creature is capable of the miſery that wicked men are capable of when they die, there is the end of all their miſery; but it is not ſo with men. Better therefore had it been for them, if God had created them in the baſeſt and loweſt order and rank of creatures; a dog, a toad, a worm is better than a man in endleſs miſery, ever dying, and never dead. And ſo much of the ſoul's immortality.

EPHE-

EPHESIANS v. 29.

For no man ever yet hated his own fleſh, but nouriſheth and cheriſheth it, even as the Lord the church.

HAVING given ſome account of the nature and immortality of the ſoul, we next come to diſcourſe its love and inclination to the body, with which it is united from this text. The ſcope of the apoſtle is, to preſs Chriſtians to the exact diſcharge of thoſe relative duties they owe to each other; particularly, he here urgeth the mutual duties of huſbands and wives; [ver. 22.] wives, to an obedient ſubjection; huſbands, to a tender love of their wives. This exhortation he enforceth from the intimate union which by the ordinance of God is betwixt them, they being now one fleſh. And this union he illuſtrates by comparing it with, 1. The myſtical union of Chriſt and the church. 2. The natural union of the ſoul and body. And from both theſe, as excellent examples and patterns, he with great ſtrength of argument urgeth the duty of love; [ver. 28.] 'So ought men to 'love their wives as their own bodies; he that loveth his 'wife, loveth himſelf.' Self-love is naturally implanted in all men, and it is the rule by which we meaſure out and diſpenſe our love to others.—'Thou ſhalt love thy 'neighbour as thyſelf.' This ſelf-love he opens in this place by, (1.) The univerſality of it. (2.) The effects that evidence it.

(1.) The univerſality of it, 'No man ever yet hated 'his own fleſh.' By fleſh, underſtand the body, by a uſual metonymy of a part for the whole, called fleſh; by hating it, underſtand ſimple hatred, or hatred in itſelf. It is uſeful for men to hate the deformities and diſeaſes of their own bodies, and upon that account, to deal with the members of their own bodies, as if they hated them: hence it is, they willingly ſtretch forth a gangrened leg or arm to be

be cut off, for the preſervation of the reſt: but this is not ſimple hatred of a man's ſelf, but rather an argument of the ſtrength of the ſoul's love to the body, that it will be content to endure ſo much pain and anguiſh for its ſake. And if the ſoul be at any time weary of, and willing to part, not with a ſingle member only, but with the whole body, and loaths its union with it any longer, yet it hates and loaths it not ſimply in and for itſelf, but becauſe it is ſo filled with diſeaſes all over, and loads the ſoul daily with ſo much grief, that how well ſoever the ſoul loves it in itſelf, yet upon ſuch ſad terms and conditions it would not be tied to it. This was Job's caſe, [Job x. 1.] 'My 'ſoul is weary of my life;' yet not ſimply of his life, but ſuch a life in pain and trouble. Except it be in ſuch reſpects and caſes, no man, ſaith he, ever yet hated his own fleſh; *i. e.* no man in his right mind, and in the exerciſe of his reaſon and ſenſe; for we muſt except diſtracted and delirious men, who know not what they do, as alſo men under the terrors of conſcience, when God ſuffers it to rage in extremity, as Spira, and others, who would have been glad with their own hands to have cut the thread that tied their miſerable ſouls to their bodies, ſuppoſing that way, and by that change, to find ſome relief. Either of theſe caſes forces men to act beſide the ſtated rule of nature and reaſon.

(2.) This love of the ſoul to the body is farther diſcovered by the effects which evidence it, viz. Its nouriſhing and cheriſhing the body. Theſe two compriſe the neceſſaries of the body, viz. food and raiment. The firſt ſignifies to nouriſh with proper food; the latter, to warm by cloathing. The care and proviſion of theſe things for the body evidences the ſoul's love to it.

Doct. *That the ſouls of men are ſtrongly inclined and tenderly affected towards their bodies, in which they now dwell.*

The ſoul's love to the body is ſo ſtrong, natural, and inſeparable, that it is made the rule and meaſure by which we diſpenſe and proportion our love to others, [Matt. xix.

19.] 'Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf.' And the apoſtle, [Gal. v. 14.] tells us that the whole law, *i. e.* the ſecond table of the law, is fulfilled, or ſummed up in this precept, 'Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf.' The meaning is not, that all and every one who is our neighbour, muſt be equally near to us, as our own bodies; but it intends, (1.) the ſincerity of our love to others, which muſt be without diſſimulation, for we diſſemble not in ſelf love. (2.) That we be as careful to avoid injuring others, as we would ourſelves. [Matt. vii. 12.] To do by others, or meaſure to them, as we would have done, or meaſured unto us: for which rule, Severus the heathen emperor honoured Chriſt and Chriſtianity, and cauſed it to be written in capital letters of gold. (3.) That we take direction from this principle of ſelf love, to meaſure out our care, love, and reſpect to others, according to the different degrees of nearneſs in which we ſtand to them, (1.) The wife of our boſom, to whom, by this rule, is due our firſt care and love, as in the text. (2.) Our children and family, [I. Tim. v. 8.] (3.) To all in general, whether we have any bond of natural relation upon them or no; but eſpecially thoſe to whom we are ſpiritually related, as [Gal. vi. 10.] And indeed, as every Chriſtian hath a right to our love and care, above other men, ſo in ſome caſes, we are to exceed this rule of ſelf love, by a tranſcendent act of ſelf denial for them, [I. John iii. 16.] And Paul went higher than that, in a glorious exceſs of charity to the community or body of God's people, preferring their ſalvation, not only to his own body, but to his ſoul alſo, [Rom. ix. 3.] But to theſe extraordinary caſes we are ſeldom called; and if we be, the goſpel furniſheth us with an higher rule than ſelf love, [John xiii. 34.] but by this principle of ſelf love in all ordinary caſes, we muſt proportion and diſpenſe our love to all others: by which you ſee what a deep rooted, fixed principle in nature ſelf love is, how univerſal and permanent alone this is, which elſe were not fit to be made the meaſure of our love to all others.—Two things will deſerve our conſideration in the doctrinal part of this point.—

Firſt,

First, Wherein the ſoul evidenceth its love to the body. Secondly, What are the grounds and fundamental cauſes or reaſons of its love to it? and then apply it,

First, Wherein the ſoul evidenceth its love to the body, and that it doth in divers reſpects:

1. In its cares for the things needful to the body, as the text ſpeaks, in nouriſhing and cheriſhing it, *i. e.* taking care for food and raiment for it. This care is univerſal, it is implanted in the moſt ſavage and barbarous people; and is generally ſo exceſſive and exorbitant, that though it never needs a ſpur, yet moſt times, and with moſt men it doth need a curb; and therefore Chriſt in Matt. vi. 32. ſhews how thoſe cares torture and diſtract the nations of the world, warns them againſt the like exceſſes, and propounds a rule to them for the allay and mitigation of them, [ver. 25—27.] So doth the apoſtle alſo, [I. Cor. vii. 29—31.] To ſpeak as the matter is, moſt ſouls are overheated with their cares, and eager purſuit after the concerns of the body. They pant after the duſt of the earth. They pierce themſelves through with many ſorrows, [I. Tim. vi. 10.] They are cumbered like Martha, with much ſerving. It is a perfect drudge and ſlave to the body, beſtowing all its time, ſtrength, and ſtudies about the body: for one ſoul that puts the queſtion to itſelf, 'What ſhall I do to be ſaved?' a thouſand are to be found, that mind nothing more, but, What ſhall I eat? What ſhall I drink? And wherewith ſhall I and mine be cloathed? I do not ſay that theſe are proofs of the ſoul's regular love to the body; no, they differ from it, as a fever from natural heat. This is a doating fondneſs upon the body. He truly loves his body, that moderately and ordinately cares for what is neceſſary for it, and can keep it under, [I. Cor. ix. 27.] and deny its whining appetite, when indulgence is prejudicial to the ſoul, or warms its luſts. Believers themſelves find it hard to keep the golden bridle of moderation upon their affections in this matter. It is not every man that hath attained Agur's cool temper, [Prov. xxx. 8.] that can ſlack his pace, and drive moderately, where the intereſts of the body are concerned: the

beſt ſouls are too warm, the generality are in raging heat, which diſtract their minds. If the body were not exceeding dear to the ſoul, it would never torture itſelf day and night with ſuch anxious cares about it

2. The ſoul diſcovers its eſteem and value for the body in all the fears it hath about it. Did not the ſoul love it exceedingly, it would never be affrighted for it and on its account, ſo much and ſo often as it is. What a panic fear do the dangers of the body caſt the ſoul into! [Iſa. vii. 2.] When the body is in danger, the ſoul is in diſtraction, the ſoul is in fears and tremblings about it. Theſe fears flow from the ſoul's tender love and affection to the body; if it did not love it ſo intenſely, it would never afflict and torment itſelf at that rate it doth about it: Satan, the profeſſed enemy of our ſouls, being thoroughly acquainted with thoſe fears which flow from the fountain of love to the body, politicly improves them in the way of temptation, to the utter ruin of ſome, and the great hazard of other ſouls; he edges and ſharpens his temptations upon us this way: he puts our bodies into danger that he may thereby endanger our ſouls; he reckons if he can but draw the body into danger, fear will quickly drive the ſoul into temptation: it is not ſo much from Satan's malice or hatred of our bodies, that he ſtirs up perſecution againſt us; but he knows the tie of affection is ſo ſtrong betwixt theſe friends, that love will draw, and fear will drive the ſoul into many and great hazards of its own happineſs, to free the body out of thoſe dangers. [Prov. xxix. 25.] 'The fear of man brings a ſnare:' and Heb. xi. 37. 'tortured and tempted.'—Upon this ground alſo it is, that this life becomes a life of temptation to all men, and there is no freedom from that danger, till we be freed from the body, and ſet at liberty by death. Separated ſouls are the only free ſouls. They that carry no fleſh about them, need carry no fears of temptation within them. It is the body which catches the ſparks of temptation.

3. The ſoul manifeſts its dear love and affection to the body, by its ſympathy and compaſſionate feeling of all its burdens: whatever touches the body by way of injuring,

affects

affects the ſoul alſo by way of ſympathy. The ſoul and body are as the ſtrings of two muſical inſtruments, ſet exactly at one height; if one be touched the other trembles. They laugh and cry, are ſick and well together. This is a wonderful myſtery, and a rare ſecret, as a learned man obſerves, how the ſoul comes to ſympathize with the body, and to have not only a knowledge, but as it were a feeling of its neceſſities and infirmities; how this fleſhly lump comes to affect, and make its deep impreſſions upon a creature of ſo different a nature from it, as the ſoul or ſpirit is; but that it doth ſo, though we know not how, is plain and ſenſible to any man. If any member of the body, though but the loweſt and meaneſt, be in pain and miſery, the ſoul is preſently affected with it, and commands the eyes to watch, yea, to weep, the hands to bind it up with all tenderneſs, and defend it from the leaſt injurious touch; the lips to complain of its miſery, and beg pity and help from others for it. If the body be in danger, how are the faculties of the ſoul, underſtanding, memory, invention, &c. employed with utmoſt ſtrength and concernment for its deliverance? This is a real and unexceptionable evidence of its dear and tender love to the body. As thoſe that belong to one myſtical body ſhew their ſincere love this way, [I. Cor. xii. 25. 26. Epheſ. iv. 19.] ſo the ſoul.

4. The ſoul manifeſteth its love to the body by its fears of death, and extreme averſation to a ſeparation from it. On this account death is called in Job xviii. 14. the king of terrors, or the black prince, or the prince of clouds and darkneſs, as ſome tranſlate that place; we read it, the king of terrors, meaning, that the terrors at death are ſuch terrors, as ſubdue and keep down all other terrors under them, as a prince doth his ſubjects. Other terrors compared with thoſe that the ſoul conceives and conflicts with at parting, are no more than a cut finger, to the laying one's head on the block: O the ſoul and body are ſtrongly twiſt and knit together in dear bands of intimate union and affection, and theſe bands cannot be broken without much ſtruggling! O it is a hard thing

for the ſoul to bid the body farewell; it is a bitter parting, a doleful ſeparation: nothing is heard in that hour, but the moſt deep and emphatical groans; I ſay, emphatical groans, the deep ſenſe and meaning of which, the living are but little acquainted with; for no man living hath yet felt the ſorrows of a parting pull; whatever other ſorrows he hath felt in the body, yet they muſt be ſuppoſed to be far ſhort of theſe.

The ſorrows of death are in ſcripture ſet forth unto us, by the bearing throes of a travailing woman, [Acts ii. 24.] and what thoſe mean, many can tell; the ſoul is in labour, it will not let go its hold to the body, but by conſtraint; death is a cloſe ſiege, and when the ſoul is beaten out of its body, it diſputes the paſſage with death, as ſoldiers uſed to do with an enemy that enters by ſtorm, and fights and ſtrives to the laſt. It is alſo compared to a battle, or ſharp fight, [Eccleſ. viii. 8.] 'that war:' that war with an emphaſis. No conflict ſo ſharp, each labour to the utmoſt to drive the other from the ground they ſtand on and win the field. And though grace much overpowers nature in this matter, and reconciles it to death, and makes it deſire to be diſſolved, yet ſaints wholly put not off this reluctation of nature, [II. Cor. v. 2.] not that we would be uncloathed; as it is with one willing to wade over a brook to his father's houſe, puts his foot into the water, and feels it cold, ſtarts back, and is loth to venture in. Not that we would be uncloathed. And if it be ſo with ſanctified ſouls, how is it, think you, with others? Mark the ſcripture language, [Job. xxvii. 8.] God taketh away their ſouls, ſaith our tranſlator; but the root ſignifies, to pull out by plain force or violence. A graceleſs ſoul dieth not by conſent but by force. Thus Adrian bewailed his departure, *O Animula, vagula, blandula, hou quò vadis?* Yea, though the ſoul have never ſo long a time been in the body, though it ſhould live as long as any of the antediluvian fathers did for many hundred years, yet ſtill it would be loth to part; yea, though it endure abundance of miſery in the body, and have little reſt or comfort, but time ſpent in griefs and fears, yet for all that, it is loth to part with it. All this ſhows a ſtrong inclination and affection to it.

5. I.

5. Its desire of re-union continuing still with it in its state of separation, speaks its love to the body. As the soul parted with it in grief and sorrow, so it still retains even in glory an inclination to re-union, and waits for a day of re-espousals: and to that sense, some searching and judicious men understand those words of Job, [chap. xiv. 14.] 'If a man die, shall he live again?' viz. by a resurrection; if so, then all the days of my appointed separation, my soul in heaven shall wait till that change come. And to the same sense is that cry of separated souls, [Rev. vi. 9—11.] 'How long, O Lord, how long,' (i. e.) to the consummation of all things, when judgement shall be executed on them that killed our bodies, and our bodies so long absent, restored to us again? in that day of resurrection, the souls of the saints come willingly from heaven itself, to repose their bodies, and bring them to a partnership with them in their glory: for it is with the soul in heaven, as it is with an husband, who is richly entertained, feasted, and lodged abroad, but his dear wife is solitary and comfortless; it abates the completeness of his joy. Therefore we say, the saints joy is not consummate till that day.—There is an exercise for faith, hope, and desires on this account in heaven.—The union of soul and body is natural, their separation is not so: many benefits will redound to both by re-union, and the resurrection of the body is provided by God, as the grand relief against those prejudices and losses the body of the saints sustain by separation. I say, not that the propensity or inclination of the soul to re-union with its body is accompanied with any perturbation or anxiety in its state of separation; for it enjoys God, and in him a placid rest: and as the body, so the soul rests in hope; it is such a hope as disturbs not the rest of either, yet when the time is come for the soul to be re-espoused, it is highly gratified by that second marriage, glad it is to see its old dear companion, as two friends after a long separation. And so much of the evidence of the soul's love to the body.

Secondly, We next are to inquire into the grounds and reasons of its love and inclination to the body. And,

1. The

1. The fundamental ground and reaſon thereof will be found in their natural union with each other. There my text ſays it: 'No man ever yet hated his (own) fleſh.' Mark, the body is the ſoul's own; they are ſtrictly married and related to each other: the ſoul hath a propriety in its body, theſe two make up, or conſtitute one perſon. And this is no more than neceſſary for the conſervation of the ſpecies, elſe the body would be neglected, expoſed, and quickly periſh, being had in no more regard than any other body. True, they are not eſſentially one, they have far different natures, but they are perſonally one: and though the ſoul be what it was, after its ſeparation, yet to make a man the ſame complete and perfect perſon he was they muſt be re-united: hence ſprings its love to the body. Every man loves his own, [John xvii. 19.] all the world is in love with its own, and hence it cares to provide for its welfare. [I. Tim. v. 8.] 'If any man provide not 'for his own, he is worſe than an infidel;' for nature teacheth all men to do ſo. Why are children dearer to the parents than to all others, but becauſe they are their own? [Job xix. 17.] But our wives, our children, our goods are not ſo much our own as our bodies are; this is the neareſt of all natural unions. In this propriety and relation are involved the reaſons and motives of our love to, and care over the body, which is no more than what is neceſſary to their preſervation. For, were it not for this propriety and relation, no man would be at any more coſt or pains for his own body, than for that of a ſtranger. It is propriety which naturally draws love, care, and tenderneſs along with it; and theſe are ordered by the wiſdom of Providence, for the preſervation of the body, which would quickly periſh without it.

2. The body is the ſoul's antient acquaintance, and intimate friend, with whom it hath aſſiduouſly and familiarly converſed from its beginning. They have been partners in each other's comforts and ſorrows. They may ſay to each other, as Miconius did to his colleague, with whom he had ſpent twenty years in the government of the Thuringian church, 'We have run, ſtriven, laboured, fought,

fought, overcome, and lived moſt intimately and lovingly together.' Conſuetude and daily converſation begets and conciliates friendſhip and love betwixt creatures of contrary natures: let a lamb be brought up with a lion, and the lion will expreſs a tenderneſs towards it, much more the ſoul to its own body.

3. The body is the ſoul's houſe and beloved habitation, where it was born, and hath lived ever ſince it had a being, and in which it hath enjoyed all its comforts natural and ſupernatural, which cannot but ſtrengthen the ſoul's engagement to it. Upon this account the apoſtle calls it the ſoul's home, [II. Cor. v. 6.] 'Whilſt we are at home in the body.' It is true, this houſe is not ſo comfortable a habitation, that it ſhould be much deſired by many ſouls. We may ſay of many gracious ſouls, they pay a dear rent for the houſe they dwell in; or, as it was ſaid of Galba, "Their ſouls are but ill accommodated; but yet it is their home, and therefore beloved by them."

4. The body is the ſoul's inſtrument by which it doth its work and buſineſs in the world, both natural and religious, [Rom. vi. 13.] Through the bodily ſenſes it takes in all the natural comforts of this world, and by the bodily members it performs all its duties and ſervices. When theſe are broken and laid aſide by death, the ſoul knows it can work no more in that way it now doth, [John ix. 4.—Eccleſ. ix. 10.] Natural men love their bodies for the natural pleaſures they are inſtrumental to convey to their ſouls; and ſpiritual men, for the uſe and ſervice they are of to their own and others ſouls, [Phil. i. 23.]

5. The body is the ſoul's partner in the benefit of Chriſt's purchaſes. It was bought with the ſame price, [I. Cor. vi. 23.] ſanctified by the ſame Spirit, [I. Theſſ. v. 23.] intereſted in the ſame promiſes, [Matt. xxii. 32.] and deſigned for the ſame glory, [I. Theſſ. iv. 16, 17.] So that we may ſay of it, as it was ſaid of Auguſtine and his friend Alippius, "they are glued together by the blood of Chriſt." And thus of the grounds and reaſons of its love.

Inf. 1. Is it ſo? *Learn hence the mighty ſtrength and prevalence of divine love, which, overpowering all natural affections, doth not only enable the ſouls of men to take their ſeparation from the body patiently, but to long for it ardently,* [Phil. i. 23.] While ſome need patience to die, others need it as much to live, [II. Theſſ. iii. 5.]— It is ſaid, [Rev. xii. 11.] 'They loved not their lives.' And indeed on theſe terms they firſt cloſed with Chriſt, [Luke xii. 26.] To hate their lives for his ſake, (i. e.) to love them in ſo remiſs a degree, that whenever they ſhall come in competition with Chriſt, to regard them no more than the things we hate. The love of Chriſt is to be the ſupreme love, and all others to be ſubordinate to it, or quenched by it. It is not its own comfort in the body it principally and ultimately deſigns and aims at, but Chriſt's glory; and ſo this may be furthered by the death of the body, its death thereupon becomes as eligible to the ſoul as its life, [Phil. i. 20.] O this is a high pitch of grace! A great attainment, to ſay as one did, "I refuſe life to be with Chriſt:" or another, when aſked whether he was willing to die? anſwered, "Let him be loth to die, that is loth to go to Chriſt." So [II. Cor. v.] we are willing rather to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord. It is not every Chriſtian that can arrive to this degree of love; though they love Chriſt ſincerely, yet they ſhrink from death cowardly, and are loth to be gone. There are two ſorts of grounds upon which Chriſtians may be loth to be unbodied; 1. Sinful. 2. Allowable.

1. The ſinful and unjuſtifiable grounds are ſuch as theſe, viz. (1.) Guilt upon the conſcience, which will damp and diſcourage the ſoul, and make it loth to die.— It arms death with terror, 'the ſting of death is ſin.' (2.) Unmortified affections to the world, I mean in ſuch a degree as is neceſſary to ſweeten death, and make a man a volunteer in that ſharp engagement with that laſt and dreadful enemy. It is with our hearts as with fuel, if green and full of ſap, it will not burn; but if that be dried up, it catches preſently, Mortification is the dry-

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ing up of carnal affections to the creature, which is that that reſiſts death, as green wood doth the fire. (3.) The weakneſs and cloudineſs of faith. You need faith to die by, as well as to live by, [Heb. xi. 13.] 'All theſe died 'in faith.' The leſs ſtrength there is in faith, the more in death. A ſtrong believer welcomes the meſſengers of death, when a weak one, unleſs extraordinarily aſſiſted, trembles at them.

2. There are grounds on which we may deſire a longer continuance in the body, warrantably and allowably: as, (1.) To do him yet more ſervice in our bodies before we lay them down. This the ſaints have pleaded for longer life, [Pſal. xxx. 2. Pſal. lxxxvii. 11, 19, 13. and Iſa. xxxviii. 18, 19.] (2.) To ſee the clouds of God's anger diſpelled, whether public or perſonal, and a clear light break out ere we die, [Pſal. xxvii. 13.] (3.) They may deſire with ſubmiſſion to outlive the days of perſecution, and not to be delivered into the hands of cruel men, but come to their graves in peace, [Pſal. xxxi. 15. and II. Theſſ. iii. 2.] that they may be delivered from abſurd men. But though ſome Chriſtians ſhun death upon a ſinful account, and others upon a juſtifiable one, yet others there are, who, ſeeing their title clear, their work done, and reliſhing the joys of heaven in the prelibations of faith, are willing to be uncloathed, and to be with Chriſt. Their love to Chriſt hath extinguiſhed in them the love of life; and they can ſay with Paul, [Acts xxi. 13.] I am ready. Ignatius longed to come to thoſe beaſts that were to devour him; and ſo many of the primitive Chriſtians. Chriſt was ſo dear, that their lives were cheap and low-prized things for his enjoyment. And here indeed is the glory and triumph of a Chriſtian's faith and love to Chriſt; for, (1.) It enables him to part cheerfully with what he ſees and feels, for what his eyes yet never ſaw; [I. Pet. i. 8.] 'Whom having not ſeen, ye 'love.' (2.) To part with what is deareſt on earth, and lies neareſt the heart of all he enjoys, for Chriſt's ſake. (3.) To reconcile his heart to what is moſt abhorrent and formidable to nature. (4.) To endure the greateſt of

pains and torments to be with him. (5.) To caſt himſelf into the ocean of eternity, the moſt amazing change, to be with Chriſt. O the glorious conqueſts of love!

Inf. 2. *Then the apoſtaſy of unregenerate profeſſors in times of imminent danger is not to be wondered at.*— They will and muſt warp from Chriſt, when their lives are in hazard for him. The love of the body will certainly prevail over their love to Chriſt and religion. Self-love will now draw. Love is the weight of the ſoul, which inclines and determines it; in the competition of intereſts, the predominant intereſt always carries it. Every unregenerate profeſſor loves his own life more than Chriſt; prefers his body before his ſoul; ſuch a one may upon divers accounts, as education, example, ſlight convictions of conſcience, or oſtentation of gifts, fall into a profeſſion of religion, and continue a long time in that profeſſion, before he viſibly recede from Chriſt: hope of the reſurrection of the intereſt of religion in the world; ſhame of retracting his profeſſion; applauſe of his zeal and conſtancy in higher trials; the peace of his own conſcience, and many ſuch motives, may prevail with a carnal profeſſor to endure a while; but when dangers of life come to an height, they are gone, [Matt. xxiv. 8, 9, 10.] And therefore our Lord tells us, that they who hate not their lives, cannot be his diſciples, [Luke xii. xxvi.] Now will they loſe their lives by ſaving them, [Matt. xvi. 25.] And the reaſons are plain and forcible. For,

1. Now is the proper ſeaſon for the predominant love to be diſcovered, it can be hid no longer; and the love of life is the predominant love in all ſuch perſons; for do but compare it with their love to Chriſt, and it will eaſily be found ſo: they love their lives truly and really, they love Chriſt but feignedly and pretendedly; and the real will muſt prevail over the feigned love. They love their lives fervently and intenſely; Chriſt but coldly and remiſsly: and the fervent love will prevail over the remiſs. Their love to their bodies hath 'a root in themſelves,' their love to Chriſt hath no root, [Matt. xiii. 21.] And that which hath a root, muſt needs outlaſt that which hath

none. 2. Becauſe when life is in hazard, conſcience will work in them by way of diſcouragement; it will hint the danger of their eternal ſtate to them, and tell them, they may caſt away their ſouls for ever in a bravado; for though the cauſe they are called to ſuffer for be good, yet their condition is bad: and if the condition be not good as well as the cauſe, a man is loſt for ever, though he ſuffer for it, [I. Cor. xiii. 3.] Conſcience, which encourages and ſupports the upright, will daunt and appal the hypocrite, and tell him, he is not on the ſame terms in ſufferings that other men are. 3. Becauſe then all the ſprings by which their profeſſion was fed and maintained, fail and dry up. Now the wind that was in their backs is come about, and blows a ſtorm in their faces; no preferments nor honours are now to be had from religion. Theſe men's ſufferings are a perfect ſurpriſe to them, for they never counted the coſt, [Luke xiv. 28.] Now they muſt ſtand alone, and reſiſt unto blood, and ſacrifice all viſibles for inviſibles, and this they can never do.

O therefore, profeſſors, look to your hearts, try their predominant love; compare your love to Chriſt with that to your lives! Now the like queſtion will be put to you that once was put to Peter, [John xxi. 15.] 'Loveſt 'thou me more than theſe?' What ſay you to this?—You think now you do; but alas! your love is not yet brought to the fire to be tried. You think you hate ſin, but will you be able to ſtrive unto blood againſt ſin? [Heb. xii. 4.] Will you chuſe ſuffering rather than ſin? [Job xxxvi. 21.] O try your love to Chriſt, before God bring it to the trial. Sure I am, the love of life will make you warp in the hour of temptation; except, 1. You ſat down and counted the coſt of religion beforehand; if you ſet out in profeſſion only for a walk, not for a journey; if you go to ſea for recreation, not for a voyage; if you be mounted among other profeſſors only to take the air, and not to engage an enemy in ſharp and bloody encounters, you are gone. 2. Except you live by faith, and not by ſenſe, [II. Cor. iv. 18.] 'Whilſt we look not at the things that are ſeen.'—

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You muſt balance preſent ſufferings with future glory.—You muſt go by that account and reckoning, [Rom. viii. 18.] or you are gone, 'Now the juſt ſhall live by faith;' and if faith do not ſupport you, your fears will certainly ſink you. 3. Except you be ſincere and plain-hearted in religion, driving no deſign in it but to ſave your ſouls; elſe ſee your lot in that example, [II. Tim. iv. 10.] 'Demas hath forſaken me.' O take heed of a cunning, double heart in religion! be plain, be open; care not if your ends lie open to the eyes of all the world. 4. Except you experience the power of religion in your own ſouls, as well as wear the name of it: O, my brethren, it is not a name to live that will do you ſervice now! Many ſhips are gone down to the bottom, for all the brave names of the Succeſs, the Proſperous, the Happy Return, and ſo will you. There is a knowing in ourſelves by taſte and real experience, [Heb. x. 34.] which doth a ſoul more ſervice in a ſuffering hour, than all the ſplendid names and titles in the world. 5. Except you make it your daily work to crucify the fleſh, deny ſelf for Chriſt, in all the forms and intereſts of it. He that cannot deny himſelf, will deny Jeſus Chriſt, [Matt. xvi. 24.] let him deny himſelf, take up his croſs, and follow me, elſe he cannot be my diſciple. Ponder theſe things in your hearts, whilſt yet God delays the trial.

Inf. 3. If the ſouls of men be naturally ſo ſtrongly inclined and affected towards the body, *then hence you may plainly ſee the wiſdom of God in all the afflictions and burdens he lays upon his people in this world, and find that all is but enough to wean off their ſouls from their bodies, and make them willing to part with them.*

The life of the ſaints in this world is generally a burdened and a groaning life, [II. Cor. v. 2.] 'In this tabernacle we groan, being burdened.' Here the ſaints feel, (1.) A burden of ſin, [Rom. vii. 24.] this is a dead and a ſinking weight. (2.) A burden of affliction; of this all are partakers, [Heb. xii.] though not all in an equal degree, or in the ſame kind, yet all have their burden equal to, and even beyond their own ſtrength to ſupport it;

it; [II. Cor. i. 8.] 'preſſed above meaſure.' (3.) A burden of inward troubles for ſin, and outward troubles in the fleſh both together: ſo had Job, Heman, David, &c. Certainly this befals them not, (1.) Caſually, [Job v. 6.] it riſes not out of the duſt; (2.) Nor becauſe God loves and regards them not, for they are fruits of his love, [Heb. xii. 6.] 'Whom he loveth he correcteth;' (3.) Nor becauſe he takes pleaſure in our groans; [Lament. iii.] 'To tread under his feet the priſoners of the 'earth the Lord hath no pleaſure:' it is not for his own pleaſure, but his children's profit, [Heb. xii. 10.] And among the profits that reſult from theſe burdens, this is not the leaſt, to make you leſs fond of the body than you would elſe be, and more willing to be gone to your everlaſting reſt. And certainly all the diſeaſes and pains we endure in the body, whether they be upon inward or outward accounts, by paſſion or compaſſion from God or men, will be found but enough to wean us, and looſe off our hearts from the fond love of life. Afflictions are bitter things to our taſte, [Ruth i. 20.] ſo bitter, that Naomi thought a name of a contrary ſignification fitter for her afflicted condition; call me Marah (i. e. bitter, not Naomi, pleaſant, beautiful). And the church, [Lam. iii. 19.] calls them wormwood and gall.

The great deſign of God in afflicting them is the ſame that a tender mother projects in putting wormwood to her breaſt when ſhe would wean the child. It hath been obſerved by ſome diſcreet and grave miniſters, that before their remove from one place to another, God hath permitted and ordered ſome weaning providence to befal them; either denying wonted ſucceſs to their labours, or alienating and cooling the affections of their people towards them, which not only makes the manner of their departure more eaſy, but the grounds of it more clear.—Much ſo it falls out in our natural death, the comfort of the world is imbittered to us before we leave it; the longer we live in it, the leſs we ſhall like it. We overlive moſt of our comforts which engaged our hearts to it, that we may more freely take our leave of it. It were

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good for Chriſtians to obſerve the voice of ſuch providences as theſe, and anſwer the deſigns of them in a greater willingneſs to die. 1. Is thy body, which was once hale and vigorous, now become a crazy, ſickly, pained body to thee, neither uſeful to God, nor comfortable to thee? A tabernacle to groan and ſigh in? And little hopes it will be recovered to a better temper. God hath ordered this to make thee willing to be divorced from it. The leſs deſirable life is, the leſs formidable death will be. 2. Is thy eſtate decayed and blaſted by Providence, ſo that life, which was once full of creature-comforts, is now filled with cares and anxieties? O it is a weaning providence to the, and beſpeaks thee the more cheerfully to bid the world farewel! The leſs comfort it gives you, the leſs it ſhould entangle and engage you. We little know with what aching hearts and penſive breaſts many of God's people walk up and down, though for religion, or reputation ſake they put a good face upon it: but by theſe things God is beſpeaking and preparing them for a better ſtate. 3. Is an huſband, a wife, or dear children dead, and with them the comfort of life laid in the duſt? Why, this the Lord ſees neceſſary to do to perſuade you to come after willingly. It is cutting aſunder thy roots in the earth, that thou mayſt fall the more eaſily. O how many ſtrokes muſt God give at our names, eſtates, relations, and health, before we will give way to the laſt ſtroke of death that fells us to the ground! 4. Do the times frown upon religion? Do all things ſeem to threaten ſtormy times at hand? Are deſireable aſſemblies ſcattered; nothing but ſorrows and ſufferings to be expected in this world? By theſe things God will imbitter the earth, and ſweeten heaven to his people. 5. Is the beauty and ſweetneſs of Chriſtian ſociety defaced and decayed? Does that communion which was wont to be pithy, ſubſtantial, ſpiritual, and edifying, become either frothy or contentious, ſo that thy ſoul has no pleaſure in it? This alſo is a weaning providence to our ſouls. Strigelius deſired to die that he might be freed from the wranglings and contentions that were in his time. Our

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fond affection to the body requires all this, and much more, to wean and mortify them.

Inf. 4. *How comfortable is the doctrine of the reſurrection to believers, which aſſures them of receiving their bodies again, though they part with them for a time!*

Believers muſt die as well as others: their union with Chriſt privileges them not from a ſeparation from their bodies, [Rom. viii. 10. Heb. ix. 27.] But yet they have ſpecial grounds of conſolation againſt this doleful ſeparation above all others. For, 1. Though they part with them, yet they part in hopes of receiving them again, [I. Theſſ. iv. 13, 14.] They take not a final leave of them when they die. Huſbandmen caſt their ſeed-corn into the earth cheerfully and willingly, becauſe they part with it in hope; ſo ſhould we when we commit our bodies to the earth at death. 2. Though death ſeparates theſe dear friends from each other, yet it cannot ſeparate either the one or other from Chriſt, [Luke xx. 37, 38.] 'I am the 'God of Abraham,' &c. Your very duſt is God's, and the grave rots not the bond of the covenant. 3. The very ſame body we lay down at death, we ſhall aſſume again at the reſurrection: not only the ſame ſpecifical, but the ſame numerical body; [Job xix. 25, 26.] 'With theſe 'eyes ſhall I ſee God.' 4. The unbodied ſoul ſhall not find the want of its body ſo as to afflict or diſquiet it; nor the body the want of its ſoul; but the one ſhall be at reſt in heaven, and the other aſleep in the grave; and all that long interval ſhall ſlide away without any afflicting ſenſe of each other's abſence. The time will be long, [Job xiv. 12.] but if it were longer, it cannot be afflicting, conſidering how the ſoul is cloathed immediately, [II. Cor. v. 1, 2.] and how the body ſleeps ſweetly in Jeſus, [I. Theſſ. iv. 14.] 5. When the day of their reeſpouſals is come, the ſoul will find the body ſo tranſformed and improved, that it ſhall never receive prejudice from it any more, but a ſingular addition to its happineſs and glory. Now it clogs us; [Matt. xxvi. 41.] 'The 'Spirit indeed is willing, but the fleſh is weak.' It incumbers us with cares to provide for it, and eats up time

and thought; but then it will be a ſpiritual body, [I. Cor. xv. 43.] like to the angels for manner of ſubſiſtence, [Luke xx. 35, 36. I. Cor. vi. 3.] and, which is the higheſt ſtep of glory, like unto Chriſt's glorious body, [Phil. iii. 21.] Well therefore might the one ſay, "the reſurrection of the dead is the conſolation of Chriſtians."

USE II. *Of Reproof.*

In the next place let me preſs you to regulate your love to your bodies, by the rules of religion and right reaſon: I muſt preſs you to love them, though nature itſelf teacheth you ſo to do; but I preſs you to love them as Chriſtians, as men that underſtand the right uſe and improvement of their bodies. There are two ſorts of errors in our love to the body, one in *defect*, the other in *exceſs*; both come fitly here to be cenſured and healed.

Firſt, Some offend in the defect of love to their own bodies, who uſe them as if they had no love for them, whoſe ſouls act as if they were enemies to their own bodies, they do not formally and directly hate them, but conſequentially and eventually they may be ſaid to hate them, and that,

(1.) By defiling them with filthy luſts; ſo the apoſtle ſpeaks, [I. Cor. vi. 18.] 'Every ſin that a man doth, is 'without the body, but he that committeth adultery ſin-'neth againſt his own body:' in other ſins it is the inſtrument, but here it is both inſtrument and object; not only God, but your own bodies are abuſed, and wronged by it. The body may be conſidered two ways, either, 1. as our veſſel; or, 2. as the ſpirit's temple. 1. As our veſſel or inſtrument for natural and ſpiritual uſes and ſervices; and on that account we ſhould not injure or defile it, [I. Theſſ. iv. 4, 5.] but poſſeſs it in ſanctification and honour. The luſts of uncleanneſs, gluttony, and drunkenneſs, quench the vigour, blaſt the beauty, and deſtroy the health and honour of the body; and ſo render it both naturally and morally unfit for the ſervice and uſe of the ſoul. 2. And the injury is yet greater, if we conſider it as the ſpirit's temple. On this ground the apoſtle ſtrongly con-

convinceth, and diſſuadeth Chriſtians from theſe abuſes of the body, [I. Cor. vi. 15, 16.] He argues from the dignity God will put upon our bodies by the reſurrection, [ver. 13, 14.] They are to be transformed, and made like unto Chriſt's glorious body; and from the honour he has already put upon the bodies of the ſaints, in their union with Chriſt, [ver. 15, 16.] They, as well as the ſoul, are ingrafted into him, and joined with him; they are his temples, to be dedicated, hallowed, and conſecrated to his ſervice. O let them not be made a ſink for luſts, or mere ſtrainers for meat and drink!

(2.) By macerating them with covetous luſts, denying them their due comforts and refreſhments, and unmercifully burdening them with labours and ſorrows about things that periſh. (1.) Some deny their bodies due comforts and refreſhments, which the natural and poſitive laws of God both allow and command. Their ſouls are cruel ſtep-mothers to their bodies, and keep them too ſhort; not out of a prudent and Chriſtian deſign to ſtarve their luſts, but to advance their eſtates. Of this evil Solomon ſpeaks, [Eccleſ. vi. 22.] 'There is an evil which I have 'ſeen under the ſun, and it is common among men; a 'man whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, 'ſo that he wanteth nothing for his ſoul of all that he 'deſireth; yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, 'but a ſtranger eateth it. This is vanity, and it is an evil 'diſeaſe.' Tenacity is a diſeaſe of the ſoul, like that of a dyſcraſy in the ſtomach, which ſo indiſpoſeth it, that it cannot receive with any appetite or delight the beſt refreſhments at a plentiful table. (2.) And others there are that wrong and abuſe their own bodies, by laying unreaſonable and unmerciful loads upon them, eſpecially loads of grief and ſorrow, waſting and weakening them beyond all rules of reaſon or religion. If a friend or relation die, they have leſs mercy on their own bodies than a conſcientious man hath on the horſe he rides. Cares and ſorrows are as deadly to the body as the ſword, [I. Tim. vi 10.] intenſe and immoderate griefs about worldly loſſes and croſſes have ſlain their ten thouſands; and, which is

ſtrange, the ſoul ſeems to take a certain kind of pleaſure in loading and tormenting the body. There is a real truth in that ſtrange expreſſion of Seneca, "ſorrow itſelf hath a certain kind of pleaſure attending it."

The ſouls of thoſe mourners do willingly excite and provoke their own griefs, when they begin to abate, which is like the whetting of a knife that grows dull, to make it cut the deeper into the body. Thus, as Seneca obſerves, "ſome parents that have loſt their beloved children, willingly call to mind their pleaſant ſayings, and pretty actions, to find a kind of pleaſure in a freſh ſhower of tears for them;" when, poor hearts, ſorrow ſo hath broken them already, that they need conſolations under their preſent ſorrows, rather than irritations of new ones. And the ſoul's unmercifulneſs to the body is in ſuch caſes farther diſcovered by its obſtinate refuſal of all that is comforting and relieving. So it is ſaid of Rachel, [Jer. xxxi. 15.] 'Rachel weeping for her children, would not 'be comforted, becauſe they were not.' So the Iſraelites hearkened not unto Moſes, becauſe of the anguiſh of ſpirit, and the cruel bondage, [Exod. vi. 9.] Thus we ſtudiouſly rake together, and exaſperate whatſoever is piercing, wounding, and overwhelming, and ſhut our ears to all that is relieving and ſupporting, which is cruelty to our own bodies, and that which hath ſo far broken the health and ſtrength of ſome bodies, that they are never like to be uſeful inſtruments to the ſoul any more in this world; ſuch deep and deſperate wounds have their own ſouls given them by immoderate grief, as will never be perfectly healed but by the reſurrection. Of theſe wounds the body may ſay, as it is Zech. xiii. 6. Theſe are the wounds with which I was wounded in the houſe (or by the hand) of my friend; thus my own ſoul hath dealt cruelly and unmercifully with me.

Secondly, Others offend in the exceſs and extravagancy of their love to the body, and theſe are a hundred to one in number with thoſe that ſin in defect of love. My friends, upon a due ſearch it will be found, that the love of our ſouls generally degenerates into fondneſs and folly.

There

There is but little well-tempered and ordinate love found among men. We make fondlings, yea, we make idols of our own bodies; we rob God, yea, our own ſouls, to give to the body. It is not a natural and kindly heat of love, but a mere feveriſh heat, which preys upon the very ſpirits of religion, which is found with many of us. This feveriſh diſtemper may be diſcovered by the beating of our pulſe, in three or four particulars.

(1.) This appears by our ſinful indulgence to our whining appetites. We give the fleſh whatſoever it craves, and can deny it nothing it deſires; pampering the body, to the great injury and hazard of the ſoul. Some have their converſation in the luſts of the fleſh, as it is Eph. ii. 3. trading only in thoſe things that pleaſe and pamper the fleſh: 'They ſow to the fleſh,' [Gal. vi. 8.] (i. e.) all their ſtudies and labours are but the ſowing of the ſeeds of pleaſure to the fleſh. Not a handful of ſpiritual ſeed ſown in prayer for the ſoul all the day long; what the body craves, the obſequious ſoul, like a ſlave, is at its beck to give it. [Tit. iii. 3.] 'Serving divers luſts and 'pleaſures;' attending to every knock and call, to fulfil the deſires of the fleſh. O how little do theſe men underſtand the life of religion, or the great deſign of Chriſtianity! which conſiſts in mortifying, and not pampering and gratifying the body, [Rom. xiv. 13, 14.] And according to that rule all ſerious Chriſtians order their bodies, giving them what is needful to keep them ſerviceable and uſeful to the ſoul, but not gratifying their irregular deſires; giving what their wants, not what their wantonneſs calls for. So Paul, [I. Cor. ix. 27.] I beat it down, and keep it under; he underſtood it as his ſervant, not his maſter. He knew that Hagar would quickly perk up, and domineer over Sarah, expect more attendance than the ſoul, except it were kept under: theſe two verbs, ὑπωπιάζω and διδαγωγῶ are very emphatical; the former ſignifies to make it black and blue with buffetting; the other, to bring it under by checks and rebukes, as maſters that underſtand their place and authority uſe to do with inſolent and wanton ſervants. It was a rare expreſſion

of

of a heathen: "I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I ſhould be a drudge or a vaſſal to my body." And it was the ſaying of a pious divine, when he felt the fleſh rebellious and wanton: "I will make thee, thou aſs, that thou ſhalt not kick." I know the ſuperſtitious papiſts place much of religion in theſe external things; but though they abuſe them to an ill purpoſe, there is a neceſſary and lawful uſe of theſe abridgements and reſtraints upon the body; and it will be impoſſible to mortify and ſtarve our luſts, without a due rigour and ſeverity to our fleſh. But how little are many acquainted with theſe things? They deal with their bodies as David with Adonijah, of whom it is ſaid, [I. Kings i. 6.] His father had not diſpleaſed him at any time, in ſaying, why haſt thou done ſo? And juſt ſo our fleſh requites us by its rebellions and treaſons againſt the ſoul; it ſeeks the life of the ſoul, which ſeeks nothing more than its content and pleaſure. This is not ordinate love, but fondneſs and folly, and what we ſhall bitterly repent for at laſt.

(2.) It appears by our ſparing and favouring of them, in the neceſſary uſes and ſervices we have for them in religion. Many will rather ſtarve their ſouls, than work and exerciſe their bodies, or diſturb their ſluggiſh reſt: thus the idle excuſes and pretences of endangering our health oftentimes put by the duties of religion, or at leaſt loſe the fitteſt and propereſt ſeaſon for them: we are laying upon our beds when we ſhould be wreſtling upon our knees: the world is ſuffered to get the ſtart of religion in the morning, and ſo religion is never able to overtake it all the day long. This was none of David's courſe, he prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried, [Pſal. cxix. 147. and Pſal. v. 3] 'My voice ſhalt 'thou hear in the morning, O Lord. In the morning 'will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.' And indeed we ſhould conſecrate unto God the freſheſt and fitteſt parts of our time, when our bodily ſenſes are moſt vigorous; and we would do ſo (except God by his providence diſable us) were our hearts fully ſet for God, and religion lay with weight upon our ſpirits. Some I confeſs

confeſs cannot receive this injunction, being naturally diſabled by prevailing infirmities; but thoſe that can, ought to do ſo. But O how many ſlothful excuſes doth the fleſh invent to put off duty! We ſhall injure our health, &c. O the hypocriſy of ſuch pleas! If profit or pleaſure call us up, we have no ſuch ſhifts, but can riſe early, and ſit up late. O friends, why hath God given you bodies, if not to waſte and wear them out in his ſervice, and the ſervice of your own ſouls! If your bodies muſt not be put to it, and exerciſed this way, where is the mercy of having a body? If a ſtately horſe were given you on this condition, that you muſt not ride or work him, what benefit would ſuch a gift be to you? Your bodies muſt and will wear out, and it is better wear them with working, than with ruſting: we are generally more ſolicitous to live long, than to live uſefully and ſerviceably; and it may be our health had been more precious in the eyes of God, if it had been leſs precious in our own eyes. It is juſt with God to deſtroy that health with diſeaſes, which he ſees we would caſt away in ſlothfulneſs and idleneſs. Think with thyſelf, had ſuch a ſoul as Timothy's or Gaius's been bleſſed with ſuch a body as thine, ſo ſtrong and vigorous, ſo apt and able for ſervice, they would have honoured God more in it in a day, than perhaps you do in a year. Certainly this is not love, but lazineſs; not a due improvement, but a ſinful neglect and abuſe of the body, to let it ruſt out in idleneſs, which might be employed ſo many ways for God, for your own and other ſouls. Well, remember death will ſhortly diſſolve them, and then they can be of no more uſe; and if you expect God ſhould put glory and honour upon them at the reſurrection, uſe them for God now, with a faithful ſelf-denying diligence.

(3.) It appears by our cowardly ſhrinking from dangers that threaten them, when the glory of God, our own and others ſalvation, bid us expoſe and not regard them. Some there are, that rather than they will adventure their fleſh to the rage of man, will hazard their ſouls to the wrath of God. So Spira, to ward off a deadly wound

wound from his *body* received *it* into his *ſoul*. They are too tender to ſuffer pain or reſtraint for Chriſt, but conſider not what ſufferings are prepared for the fearful and unbelieving in the world to come, [Rev. xxi. 8.] How many ſad examples do the church hiſtories of ancient and latter times affords us, of men, who conſulting with fleſh and blood in time of danger, have, in pity to their bodies, ruined their ſouls! There are few like-minded with Paul, who ſat a low price upon his liberty or life for Chriſt, [Acts xx. 24.] or with thoſe worthy Jews, [Dan. iii. 28.] who yielded their bodies to preſerve their conſciences. Few of Chryſoſtom's mind, who told the Empreſs, I fear nothing but ſin; or of Baſil's, who told the Emperor, God threatened hell, whereas he threatened but a priſon. That is a remarkable rule that Chriſt gives us, [Matt. x. 28.] The ſum of it is, to ſet God againſt man, the ſoul againſt the body, and hell againſt temporal ſufferings; and ſo ſurmounting theſe low fleſhly conſiderations, to cleave to our duty in the face of dangers. You read Gal. i. 16. how in purſuit of duty, though ſurrounded with danger, Paul would not confer or conſult with fleſh and blood, (i. e.) aſk its opinion which were beſt, or ſtay for its conſent till it were willing to ſuffer; he underſtood not that the fleſh had any voice at the council-table in his ſoul, but willing or unwilling, if duty call for it, he was reſolved to hazard it for God. We have a great many little politicians among us, who think to huſband their lives and liberties a great deal better than other plain-hearted and too-forward Chriſtians do; but theſe politicks will be their perdition, and their craft will betray them to ruin. They will loſe their lives by ſaving them, when others will ſave them by loſing them, [Matt. x. 39.] For the intereſt of the body depends on, and follows the ſafety of the ſoul, as the cabin doth the ſhip. O my friends, let me beg you not to love your bodies into hell, and your ſouls too for their ſakes! Be not ſo ſcared at the ſufferings of the body, as with poor Spira, to daſh them both againſt the wrath of the great and terrible God. Moſt of thoſe ſouls that are now in hell, are there upon the account of their indulgence to the fleſh: they could

nor deny the flesh, and now are denied by God. They could not suffer for men, and now must suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

(4.) In a word, it appears we love them fondly and irregularly, in that we cannot with any patience think of death and separation from them. How do some men take fright at the very name of death? And no arguments can persuade them seriously to think of an unbodied and separated state. It is as death to them, to bring their thoughts close to that ungrateful subject. A Christian that loves his body regularly and moderately, can look into his own grave with a composed mind, and speak familiary of it, as Job xvii. 14. and Peter speaks of the putting off of his body by death, as a man would of the putting off his cloaths at night, [II. Pet. i. 13, 14.] and certainly such men have a great advantage above all others, both as to the tranquillity of their life and death. You know a parting time must come, and the more fond you are of them, the more bitter and doleful that time will be. Nothing except the guilt, and terrible charges of conscience, put men into terrors at death, more than our fondness of the body. I do confess, Christless persons have a great deal of reason to be shy of death; their dying day is their undoing day: but for Christians to startle at it, is strange, considering how great a friend death will be to them that are in Christ. What are you afraid of? What, to go to Christ? To be freed of sin and affliction too soon? Certainly this hath not been so comfortable a habitation to you, that you should be loth to exchange it for a heavenly one.

USE III. *Of Exhortation.*

TO conclude: Seeing there is so strict a friendship and tender affection betwixt soul and body, let me persuade every soul of you to express your love to the body, by labouring to get union with Jesus Christ, and thereby to prevent the utter ruin of both to all eternity.

Souls, if you love yourselves, or the bodies you dwell in, shew it by your preventing care in season, lest they

be caſt away for ever. How can you ſay you love them when you daily expoſe them to the everlaſting wrath of God, by employing them as weapons of unrighteouſneſs, to fight againſt him that formed them? You feed and pamper them on earth; you give them all the delights and pleaſures you can procure for them in this world; but you take no care what ſhall become of them nor your ſouls neither after death hath ſeparated them. O cruel ſoul, cruel, not to others, but to yourſelves, and to your own fleſh, which you pretend ſo much love to! Is this your love to your bodies? What, to employ them in Satan's ſervice on earth, and then to be caſt as a prey to him for ever in hell? You think the rigour and mortification of the ſaints, their abſtemiouſneſs and ſelf denial, their cares, fears and diligence, to be too great ſeverity to their bodies: but they know, theſe are moſt real evidences of their true love to them: they love them too well to caſt them away as you do. Alas! your love to the body doth not conſiſt in feeding and cloathing and pleaſing it, but in getting it united to Chriſt and made the temple of the Holy Ghoſt: in uſing it for, and dedicating it to God.

'I beſeech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to 'preſent your bodies living ſacrifices to God, which is your 'reaſonable ſervice,' [Rom. xii. 1.] The ſoul ſhould look upon the body as a wiſe parent upon a rebellious or wanton child, that would, if left to itſelf, quickly bring itſelf to the gallows; the father looks on him with compaſſion and melting bowels, and ſaith, with the rod in his hand, and tears in his eyes, my child, my naughty diſobedient, headſtrong child, I reſolve to chaſtiſe thee ſeverely; I love thee too well to ſuffer thee to be ruined, if my care or corrections may prevent it. So ſhould our ſouls evidence their love to, and care over their own rebellious fleſh. It is cruelty, not love or pity, to indulge them to their own deſtruction.—Except you have gracious ſouls, you ſhall never have glorified bodies; except your ſouls be united with Chriſt, the happineſs of your bodies as well as ſouls is loſt to all eternity. Know you not that the everlaſting condition of your bodies follows and depends

pends on the intereſt of your ſouls? O that this one ſad truth might ſink deep into your conſiderations! that if your bodies be ſnares to your ſouls, and your ſouls be now regardleſs of the future eſtate of themſelves and them aſſuredly they will have a bitter parting at death, a terrible meeting again at the reſurrection, and horrid reflections on each other, mutually charging their ruin upon each other to all eternity: whilſt they that are in Chriſt part in hope, meet with joy, and bleſs God for each other for evermore.

II. Peter i. 13, 14.

Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to ſtir you up, by putting you in remembrance. Knowing that ſhortly I muſt put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhewed me.

At the tenth verſe of this chapter the apoſtle ſums up his foregoing precepts and exhortations in one great and moſt important duty, the making ſure of their calling and election. This exhortation he enforceth on them by a moſt ſolemn and weighty motive, [ver. 11.] 'Even an 'abundant entrance into the everlaſting kingdom.' No work of greater neceſſity or difficulty, than to make ſure our ſalvation, no argument more forcible and prevalent than an eaſy and free entrance into glory at death, a ſweet and comfortable diſſolution, to enter the port of glory before a wind, with our full lading of comfort, peace and joy in believing, our ſails full, and our ſtreamers flying: O how much better is this than to lye wind bound, I mean heart bound, at the harbour's mouth! Toſt up and down with fears, doubts, and manifold temptations, making many aboard to fetch the harbour; for ſo much is ſignified in his figurative expreſſion, [ver. 11.] And

for their encouragement in this great and difficult work, he engageth himſelf by promiſe to give them all the aſſiſtance he can, whilſt God ſhould continue his life; and knowing that would be but a little while, he reſolves to uſe his utmoſt endeavour to ſecure theſe things in their memories, after his death, that they might not die with him. This is the general ſcope and order of the words. Wherein more particularly we have, 1. His exemplary induſtry and diligence in his miniſterial work. 2. The conſideration ſtimulating and provoking him thereunto.

1. His exemplary induſtry and diligence in his miniſterial work. In which two things are remarkable, viz. (1.) The quality of his work, which was to ſtir them up, by putting them in remembrance, to keep the heavenly flame of love and zeal lively upon the altar of their hearts. He well knew what a ſleepy diſeaſe the beſt Chriſtians are troubled with, and therefore he had need to be ſtirring them up, and awakening them to their duty. (2.) The conſtancy of this work, 'as long as I am in this 'tabernacle,' *i. e.* as long as I live in this world. The body is here called a tabernacle, in reſpect of its moveableneſs and frailty, and in oppoſition to that houſe made without hands, eternal in the heavens. And it is obſervable how he limits and bounds his ſerviceableneſs to them, by his commoration in his tabernacle or body, as well knowing after death he could be no longer uſeful to them, or any others in this world. Death puts an end to all our miniſterial uſefulneſs; but till that time he judged it meet and becoming him, to be aiding and aſſiſting their faith: our life and labour muſt end together.

2. We have here the motive or conſideration ſtimulating and provoking him to this diligence, knowing that I muſt ſhortly 'put off this tabernacle, even as the Lord 'Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhewed me.' In which words he gives an account of, (1.) The ſpeedineſs; (2.) Neceſſity; (3.) Voluntarineſs of his death, and the way and means by which he knew it. All theſe muſt be conſidered ſingly and apart, and then valued altogether as they amount to a weighty argument or motive to excite him to diligence

gence in his duty. (1.) He reflects upon the ſpeedineſs or near approach of his death. I muſt ſhortly put off this my tabernacle; which is a form of ſpeech of the ſame importance with that of Paul, [II. Tim. iv. 6.] 'The 'time of my departure is at hand,' my time in the body is almoſt at an end. (2.) The neceſſity of his death; it is not I *may*, but I *muſt* put off this my tabernacle; yea, I muſt put it off ſhortly; for ſo the Lord had ſhewed him: Chriſt hath ſignified it expreſſly to him, [John xxi. 18. 19.] And beſides this, moſt expoſitors think this clauſe refers to ſome ſpecial viſion or revelation which Peter had of the time and manner of his own death.—Ταχινὴ, *brevi futurum.* Every Chriſtian knows not the time of his death, as Peter did, by ſpecial revelation. But though we know it not by a word ſpoken to us in particular, we know it by a word written for all in common, [Eccl. ix. 5.] 'The living know that they muſt die.' So that beſides the natural neceſſity or the inevitableneſs of his death by the law of nature, he was certified of it by ſpecial revelation. (3.) The voluntarineſs of his death, for voluntarineſs is conſiſtent enough with the neceſſity of the event, I muſt put off, or lay down my tabernacle; he ſaith not, I muſt be torn or rent by violence from it, but I muſt depoſe or lay it down. Camero will have the word here uſed for death, properly to ſignify the laying down of one's garments: he made no more of putting off his body than his garments. Upon this conſideration of the whole matter, the ſpeedineſs of his death, which he knew to be at hand, the neceſſity of it, that when it came he muſt be gone from them, and could be no more uſeful to them; and his own inclination to be with Chriſt in a better ſtate, being as willing to be gone as a weary traveller to be at home; he judged it meet or becoming him as he was called of Chriſt to feed his ſheep, as he was gifted extraordinary for the church's ſervice, full of ſpiriritual excellences, all which in a ſhort time would be taken away from them by death: I ſay, upon all theſe accounts he could not but judge it meet to be ſtirring them up, and every way ſtriving to be as uſeful as he might.

Doct.

Doct. *How ſtrong ſoever the affections and inclinations of ſouls are to the fleſhly tabernacle they now live in; yet they muſt put them off, and that ſpeedily.*

The point lies very plain before us in the ſcriptures. That is a remarkable expreſſion we have in Job xvi. 22. 'When 'a few years are come, I ſhall go the way whence I ſhall 'not return;' in the Hebrew it is, when the years of number, or my numbered years are come; years ſo numbered, that they are circumſcribed in a very ſhort period of time; when thoſe few years are paſt, then I muſt go to my long home, my everlaſting abode, never more to return to this world: the way whence I ſhall not return; elſewhere called the way of all fleſh, [Joſh. xxiii. 15.] and the way of all the earth, [I. Kings ii. 2.] There is no man that hath power over the ſpirit to retain the ſpirit, neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no diſcharge in that war, [Eccleſ. viii. 8.] by ſpirit underſtand the natural ſpirit, or breath of life, which, as I ſhewed before, connects or ties the ſoul and body together; this ſpirit no man can retain in the day of death: "We can (as one ſpeaks) as well ſtop the chariot of the ſun when poſting to night, and chaſe away the ſhadows of the evening, as eſcape this hour of darkneſs that is coming upon us." The man may eſcape the wars, by pleading privilege of years, or weakneſs of body or the king's protection, or by ſending another in his room; but in this war the preſs is ſo ſtrict, that it admits no diſpenſation, young or old, weak or ſtrong, willing or unwilling, all is one, into the field we muſt go, and look that laſt and moſt dreadful enemy in the face. It is in vain to think of ſending another in our room, for no man dieth by proxy; or to think of compounding with death, as thoſe ſelf-deluded fools did, [Iſa. xxviii. 15.] who thought they had been diſcharged of the debt by ſeeing the ſerjeant: no, no, there is no diſcharge in that war. *Nihil prodeſt ora concludere, & vitam fugientem retinere*, ſaith Hierom on that text: Let us ſhut our mouths never ſo cloſe, ſtruggle againſt death never ſo hard, there is no more retaining the ſpirit, than a woman can retain the fruit of her womb when the full time of her deliver-

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ance is come. Suppoſe a man were ſitting upon a throne of majeſty, ſurrounded with armed guards, or in the midſt of a college of expert and learned phyſicians, death will paſs all theſe guards to deliver thee the fatal meſſage: neither can heart help thee, when nature itſelf gives thee up.

The law of mortality binds all, good and bad, young and old, the moſt uſeful and deſirable ſaints, whom the world can worſt ſpare, as well as uſeleſs and undeſirable ſinners, [Rom. viii. 10.] 'And if Chriſt (or though 'Chriſt) be in you, the body is dead becauſe of ſin.'—Peter himſelf muſt put off his tabernacle, for they are but tabernacles, frail and moveable frames, not built for continuance: theſe will drop off from our ſouls, as the ſhell falls off from the bird in the neſt. Be our earthly tabernacles never ſo ſtrong or pleaſant, we muſt depoſe them, and that ſhortly; our leaſe in them will expire quickly; we have but a ſhort term, [James iv. 14.] like a thin miſt in the morning, which the ſun preſently diſſipates; this is a metaphor choſen from the air. You have one from the land, where the ſwift poſt runs, [Job. ix. 25.] So doth our life from ſtage to ſtage, till its journey be finiſhed; and a third from the waters, there ſail the ſwift ſhips, [Job. ix. 26.] which weighing anchor, and putting into the ſea, continually leſſen the land, till at laſt they have quite loſt ſight of it. From the fire, [Pſal. lviii. 4.] The lives of men are as ſoon extinct as a blaze made with dry thorns, which is almoſt as ſoon out as in. Thus you ſee how the Spirit of God hath borrowed metaphors from all the elements of nature, to ſhadow forth the brevity and frailty of that life we now live in theſe tabernacles: ſo that we may ſay, as one did before us, "I know not which to call it, a mortal life, or a living death."

The continuance of theſe our tabernacles or bodies is ſhort, whether we conſider them *abſolutely* or *comparatively*. 1. *Abſolutely*. If they ſhould ſtand ſeventy or eighty years, which is the longeſt duration, [Pſal. xc. 10.] how ſoon will that time run out? What are years that are paſt but as a dream that is vaniſhed, or as the waters that are paſt away? It is in a continual flux. There is

no ſtopping its ſwift courſe, or calling back a moment that is paſt. Death ſet out on its journey towards us the ſame hour we were born; and how near is it come this day to many of us? It hath us in chace, and will quickly fetch us up, and overtake us; but few ſtand ſo long as the utmoſt date. 2. *Comparatively.* Let us compare our time in theſe tabernacles, (1.) Either with eternity, or with him who inhabits it, and it ſhrinks up into nothing; [Pſal. xxxix. 5.] 'Mine age is nothing unto thee.' So vaſt is the diſproportion, that it ſeems not only little, but nothing at all. Or, (2.) With the duration of the bodies of men in the firſt ages of the world, when they lived many hundred years in theſe fleſhly tabernacles.—The length of their life was the benefit of the world, becauſe religion was then a thing handed down from father to ſon; but certainly it would be no benefit to us that are in Chriſt, to be ſo long ſuſpended the fruition of God in the everlaſting reſt.

The ground and reaſons of this neceſſity that lies upon all, to put off their earthly tabernacles ſo ſoon, are, 1. The law of God, or his appointment. 2. The providence of God ordering it ſuitably to this appointment.

1. The law or appointment of God, which came in force immediately upon the fall; [Gen. ii. 17.] 'In the 'day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die.' And accordingly it took place upon all mankind immediately upon the firſt tranſgreſſion, [Rom. v. 12.] 'Death en-'tered by ſin.' The threatening was not his immediate actual perſonal death in the day that he ſhould eat, but a ſtate of mortality to commence from that time to him and his poſterity; hence it is ſaid, [Heb. ix. 27.] 'It is ap-'pointed to all men once to die.' 2. The providence of God ordering and framing the body of man ſuitable to this his appointment; a frail, weak creature, having the ſeeds of death in his conſtitution; thouſands of diſeaſes and infirmities are bred in his nature, and the ſmalleſt pore in his body is a door large enough to let in death.—Hence his body is compared to a piece of cloth which moths have fretted, [Pſal. xxxix. 11.] it is become a

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ſorry rotten thing which cannot long hang together; and indeed it is a wonder it continues ſo long as it doth. And both theſe, viz. the Divine appointment and providence, are in purſuance of a double deſign, or for the payment of a twofold debt, which God owes to the firſt and to the ſecond Adam.

(1.) By cutting off the life, or diſſolving the tabernacles of wicked men, God pays that debt of juſtice owing to the firſt Adam's ſinful poſterity, whoſe ſins cry daily to his juſtice to cut them off, [Rom. vi. 23.] 'The wages 'of ſin is death.' And indeed it is admirable that his patience ſuffers ungodly men to live ſo long as they do, for he endures with much long ſuffering, [Rom. ix. 22.]—He ſees all their ſins, he is grieved at the heart with them: his forbearance doth but encourage them the more to ſin againſt him, [Eccleſ. viii. 11.] 'Becauſe ſentence,' &c. yet forbears; 'Forty years long was I grieved with this 'generation,' [Pſal. xcv. 10.] And it is wonderful that patience does not crack under ſuch a load. Habakkuk admired it, [Habak. i. 13.] 'Thou art of purer eyes,' &c. Yet he ſuffers them to ſpend laviſhly upon his patience from year to year, but juſtice muſt do its office at laſt.

(2.) By cutting off the lives of good men, God pays to Chriſt the reward of his ſufferings, the end of his death, which was to bring many ſons to glory, [Heb. ii. 10.] Alas! it anſwers not Chriſt's end and intention in dying, to have his people ſo remote from him; [John xvii. 24.] 'He would have them where he is, that they 'might behold his glory.' Two vehement deſires are ſatisfied by this appointment of God and its execution, viz. 1. Chriſt's. 2. The ſaint's.

1. Chriſt's deſires are ſatisfied; for this is the thing he all along kept his eye upon in the whole work of his mediation, it was to bring us to God, [I. Pet. iii. 18.] Though he be in glory, yet his myſtical body is not full till all the elect be gathered in by converſion, and gathered home by glorification, [Eph. i. 23.] The church is his fulneſs. He is not fully ſatisfied till he ſee his ſeed, the ſouls he died for, ſafe in heaven, and then the debt due

to him for all his ſufferings is fully paid him; [Iſa. liii. 12.] He ſees the travail of his ſoul. As it is the greateſt ſatisfaction and pleaſure a man is capable of in this world, to ſee a great deſign, which hath been long projecting and managing, at laſt by an orderly conduct brought to its perfection.

2 The deſires of the ſaints are hereby ſatisfied, and their weary ſouls brought to reſt. O what do gracious ſouls more pant after than the full enjoyment of God, and the viſions of his face! The ſtate of freedom from ſin, and complete conformity to Jeſus Chriſt! From the day of their eſpouſals to Chriſt theſe deſires have been working in their ſouls, love and patience have each acted its part in them, [II. Theſſ. iii. 5.] Love hath put them into a holy ardour and longing to be with Chriſt; patience hath qualified and allayed thoſe deſires, and ſupported the ſoul under the delay. Love cries, Come, Lord, come. Patience commands us to wait the appointed time: this appointed time, on which ſo great hopes and expectations depend, is the time of diſſolving theſe tabernacles; for till then the ſoul's reſt is ſuſpended; and if it were perfectly freed from all other loads and burdens, both of ſin and affliction, yet its very abſence from Chriſt would alone make it reſtleſs: for it is with the ſoul in the body, as it is with any other creature that is off its center, it doth, and muſt gravitate and propend, it is ſtill moving and inclining farther, and feels not itſelf eaſy, and at reſt, where it is, be its condition in other reſpects never ſo eaſy. [II. Cor. v. 6.] 'Whilſt we are at home in the body, we 'are abſent from the Lord.' You have a little ſhadow or emblem of this in other creatures: you ſee the rivers, though they glide never ſo ſweetly betwixt the fragrant banks of the moſt pleaſant meadows in their courſe and paſſage, yet on they go towards the ſea; and if they meet with never ſo many rocks or hills to reſiſt their courſe, they will either ſtrive to get a paſſage through them; or if that may not be, they will fetch a compaſs, and creep about them, and nothing can ſtop them till by a central force they have finiſhed their weary courſe, and poured themſelves

themſelves into the boſom of the ocean. Or, as it is with yourſelves when abroad from your habitations and relations, this may be pleaſing a little while; but if every day might be a feſtival, it would not long pleaſe you, becauſe you are not at home. The main motives that perſuade gracious ſouls to abide here, are to finiſh the work of their own ſalvation, and farther other men's; but as their evidences for heaven grow clearer to themſelves, and their capacity of ſervice leſs to others, ſo muſt their deſires to be with Chriſt be more and more and more inflamed.

Now the caſe ſtanding ſo, that Chriſt's condition in heaven being a condition of deſires and longing for the enjoyment of his people there, and all the glory of heaven would not content him without that; and the condition of his people on earth, being alſo a ſtate of longing, groaning, and panting to be with him, and all the pleaſures, and delights, and comforts they have on earth, will not content them without it; how wiſe and gracious an appointment of heaven is it, that theſe our tabernacles ſhall and muſt be put off, and that ſhortly. For hereby a full and mutual ſatisfaction is given to the reſtleſs deſires both of Chriſt's heart and of theirs. See the reflected flames of love betwixt them in Rev. xxii. 'The Spirit 'and the bride ſay, Come, and let him that is athirſt 'come; behold, I come quickly; even ſo Lord Jeſus, 'come quickly.' Delays make the heart ſad, [Prov. xiii. 12.] Should our commoration on earth be long, our patience had need be much greater than it is; but under all our burdens here, this is our relief, it is but a little while, and all will be well, as well as our ſouls can deſire to have it.

Inf. 1. Muſt we put off theſe tabernacles? Is death neceſſary and inevitable? *Then it is our wiſdom to ſweeten to ourſelves that cup which we muſt drink, and make that as pleaſant to us as we can, which we know cannot be avoided.* Die we muſt, whether we be fit or unfit, willing or unwilling: it is to no purpoſe to ſhrug at the name, or ſhrink back from the thing. In all ages of the world death hath ſwept the ſtage clean of one generation, to make room for another,

other, and ſo it will from age to age, till the ſtage be taken down in the general diſſolution.

But though death be inevitable by all, it is not alike evil, bitter, and dreadful to all. Some tremble, others triumph at the appearance of it. Some meet it half way, receive it as a friend, and can bid it welcome, and die by conſent, making that the matter of their election, which in itſelf is neceſſary and unavoidable: ſo did Paul, [Philip. i. 23.] but others are drawn or rent by plain violence from the body, [Job xxvii.] when God draws out their ſouls.

That man is happy indeed, whoſe heart falls in with the appointment of God ſo voluntarily and freely, as that he dare not only look death in the face with confidence, but go along with it by conſent of will. Remarkable to this purpoſe is that which the apoſtle aſſerts of the frame of his own heart, [II. Cor. v. 8.] 'We are confident, I 'ſay, and willing, rather to be abſent from the body, and 'preſent with the Lord.' Here is both confidence and complacence, with reſpect to death. Θαρρῦμεν. The word ſignifies courage, fortitude, or, if you will, an undaunted boldneſs and preſence of mind, when we look the king of terrors in the face. We dare venture upon death, we dare take it by the cold hand, and bid it welcome. We dare defy its enmity, and deride its noxious power, [I. Cor. xv. 55.] 'O death, where is thy ſting?' And that is not all, we have complacence in it, as well as confidence to encounter it. Εὐδοκῦμεν. We are willing; the tranſlation is too flat, we are well pleaſed, it is a deſirable and grateful thing to us to die; but yet not in an abſolute but comparative conſideration, εὐδοκῦμεν μᾶλλον, we are willing rather, (i. e.) rather than not ſee and enjoy our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; rather than to be here always ſinning and groaning. There is no complacency in death, in itſelf it is not deſirable. But if we muſt go through that ſtrait gate, or not ſee God, we are willing rather to be abſent from the body. So that you ſee death was not the matter of his ſubmiſſion only, he did not yield to what he could not avoid, but he balances the evils of death with the

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privileges it admits the ſoul into, and then pronounces, εὐδοκεῦμεν, we are content, yea, pleaſed to die.

We cannot live always if we would, and our hearts ſhould be wrought to that frame, as to ſay, we would not live always if we could. [Job vii. 16. 'I would not 'live always or long,' ſaith he. But why ſhould Job deprecate that which was not attainable? I would not live alway; he needed not to trouble himſelf about that, it being impoſſible that he ſhould; both ſtatute and natural law forbid it. Ay, but this is his ſenſe, ſuppoſing no ſuch neceſſity as there is, if it were pure matter of election; upon a due balancing of accounts, and comparing the good and evil of death, I would not be confined always, or for any long time to the body; it would be a bondage unſupportable to be here always. Indeed thoſe that have their portion, their all, in this life, have no deſire to be gone hence. They that were never changed by grace, deſire no change by death; if ſuch a conceſſion were made to them, as was once to an Engliſh parliament, that they ſhould never be diſſolved, but by their own conſent, when would they ſay as Paul, 'I deſire to be diſſolved?' But it is far otherwiſe with them whoſe portion and affections are in another world, they would not live always if they might, knowing, that never to die, is never to be happy.

Queſt. *This is an excellent and moſt deſirable temper of ſoul; but how did theſe holy men attain it? or what is the courſe we may take to get the like frame of willingneſs?*

Sol. They attained it, and you may attain it in ſuch methods as theſe: 1. They lived in the believing views of the inviſible world, and ſo muſt you, if ever death be deſirable in your eyes, [II. Cor. iv. 18.] It is ſaid of all that died comfortably, that they died in faith, [Heb. xi. 13.] You will never be willing to go along with death, except you know where it will carry you. 2. They had aſſurance of heaven as well as faith to diſcern it: aſſurance is a lump of ſugar, indeed, in the bitter cup of death; nothing ſweetens like it. So II. Cor. v. 1. ſo Job xix. 26, 27. This puts roſes into the pale cheeks of death,

death, and makes it amiable, [I. Cor. xv. 55, 56. and Rom. viii. 38, 39.] 3. Their hearts were weaned from this world, and the inordinate affectation of a terrene life, [Phil. iii. 8.] all was dung and droſs for Chriſt; they trampled under foot what we hug in our boſoms. So it is ſaid, [Heb. x. 34.] 'Ye took joyfully the ſpoiling of 'your goods, knowing in yourſelves,' &c. and ſo it muſt be with us, if ever we obtain a complacency in death. 4. They ordered their converſations with much integrity, and ſo kept their conſciences pure and void of offence, [Acts xxiv. 16.] 'Herein do I exerciſe myſelf,' &c. And this was their comfort at laſt, [II. Cor. i. 12.] 'This 'is our rejoicing,' &c. So Job xxvii. 5. 'My inte-'grity will I not let go till I die.' O this unſtings death of all its terrors!

5. They kept their love to Chriſt at the height: that flame was vehement in their ſouls, and made them deſpiſe the terror, and deſire the friendly aſſiſtance of death, to bring them to the ſight of Jeſus Chriſt, [Phil. i. 23.] So Ignatius, "O how I long," &c. Thus it muſt be with you, if ever you make death eligible and lovely to you, which is terrible in itſelf. There is a lovelineſs in the death, as well as in the life of a Chriſtian. Let me die the death of the righteous, ſaid Balaam.

Inf. 2. Muſt we put off theſe tabernacles of fleſh? *How neceſſary is it that every ſoul look out in ſeaſon, and make proviſion for another habitation?* If you muſt be turned out of one houſe, you muſt provide another, or lye in the ſtreets. This the apoſtle comforted himſelf with, that if uncloathed, he ſhould not be found naked, [II. Cor. v. 1.] a building of God, a houſe not made with hands. You muſt turn out, and that ſhortly, from theſe earthly habitations. O what proviſion have you made for your ſouls againſt that day? the ſoul of Adrian was at a ſad loſs, when he ſaw he muſt be turned out of this world; *O animula, vagula, blandula, heu quo vadis?* But it was Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob's privilege that God had prepared for them a city, [Heb. xi. 16.]

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I know it is a common preſumption of moſt men, that they ſhall be in heaven, when they can be no longer on earth. But a few moments will convince them of their fatal miſtake; their poor ſouls will meet with a confounding repulſe, like that, Mat. vii. 22. There is indeed a city full of heavenly manſions prepared for ſome, but who are they that are intitled to it, and may confidently expect to be received into it? To be ſure, not the preſumptuous, who make a bridge of their own ſhadows, and ſo fall and periſh in the waters. Brethren, it is one of the moſt ſolemn inquiries you were ever put upon; and therefore I beſeech you ſee whether your characters ſet you among thoſe men or no.

1. Thoſe that are new-born ſhall be cloathed with their new houſe from heaven, when death uncloaths them of theſe tabernacles: the New Jeruſalem hath none but new-born inhabitants, [I. Pet. i. 3, 4.] and Chriſt tells us, [John iii. 3.] 'all others are excluded.' Glory is the privilege of grace. Let nature be adorned and cultivated how it will, if not renewed by grace, there is no hope of glory. You muſt be born again, or turned back again from the gates of heaven diſappointed. You muſt be regenerated or damned. This alters the temper of thy heart, and ſuits it to the life of God, which is indiſpenſably neceſſary to them that ſhall live with him. Elſe heaven would be no heaven to us, [Rom. viii. 7.] and therefore we muſt be wrought this way to it, [II. Cor. v. 5.] No privilege of nature, no duties of religion avail without this, [Gal. vi. 15.] If morality without regeneration could bring men to heaven, why are not the heathens there? If ſtrictneſs in duty without regeneration, why not the phariſees there? Believe it, neither names nor duties, no, nor the blood of Chriſt, ever did or ſhall bring one ſoul to glory without it. O then thou that boaſteſt of a houſe in heaven, lay thine hand on thy heart, and aſk it, am I a new creature? (*i. e.*) am I renewed, (1.) in my ſtate and condition? [I. John iii. 14.] paſt from death to life. (2.) In my frame and temper? [Eph. v. 8.] once darkneſs, now light in the Lord. (3.) In

my practice and converſation? [Eph. ii. 12, 13—I. Cor. vi. 11.] If not, my ſoul is deſtitute of a habitation in the city of God; and when I die, my body muſt lie in the lonely houſe of the grave, that dark vault and priſon, and my ſoul be ſhut out from God into outer darkneſs.

2. Thoſe that live as ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth, ſeeking a better place and ſtate than this world affords them, for them God hath made preparations in glory, [Heb. xi. 13, 16.] If you be ſtrangers on earth, you are the inhabitants of heaven. Now there be ſix things included in this character: (1.) They look not on this world as their own home, nor on the people of it as their own people, [II. Cor. v. 8.] 'ἐκδημῆσαι, to be un-'peopled.' Theſe are none of my fellow citizens, we muſt go two ways at death. (2.) They ſet not their affections on things preſent as their portion, [II. Cor. iv. 18. Pſal. xvii. 13, 14.] Their bodies are here, their hearts in heaven. (3.) Their carriage and manner of life not like the men of this world, [Pet. iv. 4.] ξενίζονται. So the rule guides them, [Rom. xii. 2.] and ſo their courſe is ſteered, at leaſt intended, [Philip. iii. 20.] our τὸ πολίτευμα, our trade is in heaven. (4.) Their dialect and language differs from the natives of this world. Their language is earthly, [I. John iv. 5, 6.] but theſe have a pure lip, [Zeph. iii. 9.] (5.) Their ſociety and choſen companions are not of this world, [Pſal. xvi. 3.] They are a company of themſelves, [Acts iv. 21.] (6.) Their ſpirit and temper of heart is not after the world, [I. Cor. ii. 12.] They have another ſpirit, [Numb. xiv. 24.] Theſe things diſcover us to be ſtrangers on earth, and conſequently the men for whom God hath prepared heavenly habitations when we die.

3. Thoſe that live and die by faith ſhall not fail to be received into a better habitation by death. This is another character of them that ſhall be received into glory, laid down in the ſame place, [Heb. xi. 13.] They lived by faith, and when they died, they died embracing the promiſes, which is characteriſtical of thoſe that ſhall dwell in that heavenly city; and implies, (1.) intimate acquaintance

quaintance with the promiſes, they are things well known and familiarized to them. The word ἀσπασάμενοι, *ſalutantes*, ſaluting them, is a metaphor from the manner of parting betwixt two dear and intimate friends. The faith of a Chriſtian embraces the promiſes in its arms, as dear friends uſe to do at parting; and ſaith, farewel ſweet promiſes, from which I have ſucked out ſo much relief and refreſhment in all the troubles of my life; I muſt now live no more by faith on you, but by ſight: O you have often cheered my ſoul, and been my ſong in the houſe of my pilgrimage. (2.) It implies the firm credit that a believer gives to things unſeen, upon the grounds of the promiſes, as if he did ſenſibly take and graſp them in his very arms and boſom. They take Chriſt, and all the inviſible things in the promiſes, into their ſenſible embraces, [I. Pet. i. 8.] Faith is to them inſtead of eyes. (3.) It implies the ſincerity of a believer's profeſſion, who dares truſt to that at the laſt gaſp, which he profeſſed to believe in the midſt of life, and the comforts of this world. As he profeſſed to believe in health, ſo you ſhall find his actings when his eye and heart-ſtrings are cracking, [Rom. xiv. 9.] Chriſt in the promiſes was his profeſſed joy in life, and this is what he graſps at death, and lays his laſt hold on. (4.) It ſhews you whence all a believer's comfort comes in life and death. O it is from the promiſes! Chriſt in the promiſes is the ſpring of their conſolation. This they fetch their comfort from, when the world cannot adminiſter one drop of refreſhment to them. There be two great works faith performs for the ſaints, one in life, the other in death. In life it is the principle of mortification to their ſins, in death it is the ſpring of conſolation to their hearts: it makes them die whilſt they live, and live when they die.

4. Thoſe that love the perſon and appearance of Chriſt, have a mark that ſets them among the inhabitants of heaven and glory, [II. Tim. iv. 8.] but then this love muſt be, (1.) ſincere and without hypocriſy. (2.) Supreme and above all other beloved. (3.) Conforming the ſoul

to Chriſt; if ſincere and ſupreme, it will be transformative. (4.) Longing to be with him. Such love is a mark of ſouls for whom heaven is prepared.

Inf. 3. Muſt we put off our tabernacles, and that ſhortly? *What a ſpur is this to a diligent redemption and improvement of time?* This is the uſe Peter made of it here, and every one of us ſhould make. It was ſaid of Biſhop Hooper, he was ſpare in his diet, ſpare in his words, but moſt of all, ſpare of his time. You have but a little time in theſe tabernacles, what pity it is to waſte much out of a little! (1.) Great is the worth and excellency of time, all the pleaſures of the world cannot protract, ſtop, or call back one minute of time: O what is man, that the heavenly bodies ſhould be wheeled about by Almighty power in conſtant revolutions, to beget time for him! [Pſal. viii. 3.] (2.) More precious are the ſeaſons and opportunities that are in time for our ſouls, thoſe are the golden ſpots of time; like the pearl in the oyſter-ſhell, of much more value than the ſhell that contains it. There is much time in a ſhort opportunity. There is a day on which our eternal happineſs depends, [Luke xix. 41, 42. Heb. iv. 7.] (3.) Invaluable are the things which God doth for men's ſouls in time. There are works wrought upon men's hearts in a ſeaſonable hour in this life, which have an influence into the ſoul's happineſs throughout eternity. There is a time of mercy, a time of love, viz. of illumination and converſion, and on that point of time eternal life hangs in the whole weight of it. (4.) Loſt opportunity is never to be recovered by the ſoul any more. [Ezek. xxiv. 13. Rev. xxii. 11.] To come before the opportunity, is to come before the bird be hatched; and to come after it, is to come when the bird is flown. There is no calling back time when it is once paſt. See this in the examples you find, Luke xiii. 26. Eccleſ. ix. 10. (5.) It is wholly uncertain to every ſoul, whether the preſent day may not determine his leaſe in this tabernacle, and a writ of ejection be ſerved by death upon his ſoul to-morrow, [James iv. 13.—Luke xii. 20.]

(6.) As

(6.) As ſoon as ever time ſhall end, eternity takes place. The ſtream of time delivers ſouls daily into the boundleſs ocean of vaſt eternity. *Ab hoc momento pendet æternitas.* We are now meaſured by time, hereafter by eternity. (7.) In eternity all things are fixed and unalterable. We have no more to do; all means and works are at an end, [John ix. 4. and Eccleſ. xi. 3.] 'As the 'tree falls, ſo it lies.' O that theſe weighty conſiderations might lye upon your hearts as long as you are in theſe tabernacles! If they did, (1.) the unregenerate would not ſo deſperately hazard their eternal happineſs, by trifling away their precious ſeaſons under the goſpel. O how many aged ſinners, grey-headed ſinners, hear me this day, who in fifty or ſixty years never redeemed one ſolemn hour to take their poor ſouls aſide out of the clutter and diſtracting noiſe of the world, to aſk and debate this queſtion with them! O my ſoul, how ſtands the caſe with thee in reference to the world to come! They have found no time to bethink themſelves, in what world their ſouls ſhall be landed when time ſhall deliver them up into eternity. Their whole life hath been but a continual diverſion from one trifle to another; they have been ſerious in trifles, and trifled in things moſt ſerious: this will afford horrid reflections in the world to come. (2.) The regenerate would not caſt away the comfort of their lives in the evidences of eternal life at ſo cheap a rate as they do. May I not ſay to you, as the apoſtle doth, [Heb. v. 12.] for the time you have had under the goſpel, you might have attained a rich treaſure both of grace and comfort? Is it not ſhameful and inexcuſable to be where you were twenty years paſt? O let theſe things ſink deep into every ſoul!

Inf. 4. Muſt we ſhortly put off theſe our tabernacles? *Then ſlack your pace and cool yourſelves; be not too eager in the proſecution of earthly deſigns.* O what buſtling is here for the world, and for proviſions for futurity, when as far leſs would ſerve the turn! We need not victual a ſhip to croſs the channel to France, as if ſhe were bound to the Indies. Moſt men's proviſions, at

leaſt their cares and thoughts, are far beyond the prepations of their abode in this world; the folly of this Chriſt diſcovers in that parable, [Luke xii. 19.] and on this very account gives him the title of a fool, who provided for years, many years, when, poor ſoul, he had not one night to enjoy thoſe proviſions. O the multitude of thoughts and cares this world needleſly devours! We keep ourſelves in ſuch a continual hurry and crowd of cares, thoughts and employments about the concerns of the body, that we can find little time to be alone, communing with our own hearts about our great concernments in eternity. It is with many of us, in reſpect of our ſouls, and our great intereſts, as it is with a man that is deep in thoughts about ſome ſubject that wholly ſwallows him up, he ſeeth not what he ſeeth, nor heareth what he heareth of any other matter: his eyes ſeem to look upon this or that, but it is all one as if he did not. So it was with Archimedes, who was ſo intent in drawing his mathematical ſchemes, that though all the city was in alarm, the enemy had taken it by ſtorm, the ſtreets filled with dreadful cries, and dead bodies, the ſoldiers came into his particular houſe, nay, entered his very ſtudy, and plucked him by the ſleeve, before he took any notice of it: even ſo many mens hearts are ſo profoundly immerſed and drowned in earthly cares, thoughts, projects, or pleaſures, that death muſt come to their very houſes; yea, and pull them by the ſleeve, and tell them its errand, before they will begin to awake, and come to a ſerious conſideration of things more important.

Inf. 5. If we muſt ſhortly put off theſe tabernacles: *then the groaning and mourning time of believers is but ſhort. How heavy ſoever their burden be, yet they ſhall carry it but a little way.* It is ſaid, [II. Cor. v. 4.] 'We that are 'in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened.' Good ſouls in this ſtate are every where groaning under heavy preſſures. Their burdens are of two ſorts, ſympathetical, whereby they grieve with and on the account of others, and ſo every true member of the church of God ought to ſympathize, both with God, [Pſal. cxxxix. 21.] 'Am

'not

'not I grieved with them that riſe up againſt thee?' [Pſal. xlii. 10.] it is as with a ſword in their bones; and with the people of God, [Zeph. iii. 18.] ſorrowful for the ſolemn aſſembly; ſo II. Cor. xi. 29. 'Who is of-'fended, and I burn not?' And indeed it is an argument of rich as well as true grace, that we can and do heartily mourn with and for the intereſt and people of God, though our own lot in the world, as Nehemiah's, be never ſo comfortable. Or elſe our burdens are idiopathetical, (i. e.) ſuch as we bear upon our own proper account and ſcore. And where is the Chriſtian that hath not his own burden, yea, many burdens on him at once? Some groan under the burden of ſin, [Rom. vii. 24.] ſcarce one day are the tears off ſome eyelids on this account. And who groans not under the burden of affliction, either inward upon the ſoul, [Prov. xviii. 14. Job. vi. 1—3.] or outward upon the body, ſtate, relations? &c. Theſe things make the people of God a burden to themſelves, [Job vii. 20, 21.] Yea, under theſe burdens they would ſink, did not the Lord ſuſtain them, [Pſal. lv. 22.] but God will put a ſpeedy and final end to all theſe things. When you put off this tabernacle, you put off with it all thoſe burdens, inward and outward. The ſoul preſently feels a great load off its ſhoulders: It ſhall never groan more, God ſhall thenceforth wipe away all tears from their eyes: for why are thoſe burdens now permitted and impoſed by the Lord upon you, but, (1.) to prevent ſin; [Hoſea ii. 6.] They are your clogs to keep you from ſtraying. (2.) To purge out ſin, [Iſa. xxvii. 9.] (3.) To make you long more for heaven, and the reſt to come: but all theſe ends are accompliſhed in that day you put off your tabernacles, for then ſin is gone, and reſt is come.

Inf. 6. Muſt you ſhortly put off thoſe tabernacles? Then ſpare them not whilſt you have them, but employ them for God with all diligence. Shortly they ſhall be uſeleſs to you, yea, meat for worms; now they may be ſerviceable, and their ſervice is their honour: you received them not for ſuch low ends as you employed them; for Ambroſe ſaid of Valentinian, no man was ever ſuch a

ſervant

ſervant to his maſter, as Valentinian's body was to his ſoul. See I. Cor. vi. 20. 'Glorify God in your ſouls 'and bodies, which are his:' you expect to have them glorious bodies one day; O then let them be ſerviceable bodies now! Be not fond of them to that degree many are, who chuſe rather to have them eaten out with ruſt than worn out with ſervice; it is your preſent honour to be active, and will be your ſingular comfort another day. What greater comfort when you come to put them off at death, than this, that you have employed them faithfully for God.

Inf. 7. Look beyond this embodied ſtate, and learn to live now as you hope to live ſhortly: begin to be what you expect to be. You know the time is at hand, that you ſhall live above all bodily concernments and employments, the ſoul ſhall be a drudge to the body no more.—You ſhall be as the angels, [Matt. xxii. 30.] not marrying, nor given in marriage, which is by a figure put for all carnal employments and enjoyments: eat no more, drink no more, ſleep no more, buy and ſell no more. Now ſuit yourſelves as much as your ſtate, and the duties of religion will ſuffer you to that ſtate beforehand. The ſum of what I aim at is in I. Cor. vii. 29, 30. be in all your relations as if you had none. Look on thoſe things as if already they were not, which ſhortly muſt be none of yours; and both acquaint and accuſtom your thoughts to the life of ſeparation from the body, which you muſt ſhortly leave. Which brings me home to the next point, viz. the condition of human ſouls in a ſtate of ſeparation.

HEBREWS xii. 23.

——καὶ πνεύμασι δικαίων τετελειωμένων.

——*And to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.*

THE particular ſcope of this context falls in with the general deſign of the whole goſpel, which is to perſuade men to a life of holineſs. The matter of the exhortation is moſt weighty, and the arguments enforcing it moſt powerful: he doth not talk, but diſpute; he doth not ſay, but prove, that greater and more powerful engagements unto holineſs lye upon thoſe who live under the goſpel, than upon the people who lived under the law. And thus the argument lyes in this context. If God at the delivering of the law upon Mount Sinai ſtrictly enjoined and required ſo great purity and holineſs in that people, [Exod. xix. 10.] ſignified by the ceremonies of two days preparation, the waſhing of their cloaths, abſtinence from conjugal ſociety, &c. much more doth he require and expect it in us, who are come under a much more excellent and heavenly diſpenſation than theirs was. To make good the ſequel, he compares the legal and the evangelical diſpenſation in many particulars, [ver. 18, —23.] giving the goſpel the preference throughout the whole collation. In ſum, the privileges of the New Teſtament believers are here ſtated, both negatively and poſitively.

1. Negatively, by ſhowing what we are exempted from.

2. Poſitively, Shewing what we are come unto.

1. Negatively, What we are exempted or freed from: [ver. 18—21.] 'We are not come unto the mount that 'might be touched,' &c. The ſum of all is this, that the promulgation of the law was accompanied with amazing dread and terror: for after Moſes by command from God had ſanctified the mount, and ſet rails about it, that neither prieſt nor people, man nor beaſt, might touch

the very borders of it, leſt they die, the Lord deſcended in fire upon the top of the mountain the third day in the morning, with moſt terrible tokens of divine majeſty, with thunderings, lightnings, dark clouds, and the noiſe of a trumpet exceeding loud; the mount was covered with ſmoke, as the ſmoke of a furnace, and flames mounting up unto the midſt of heaven, the whole mountain ſhaking and trembling exceedingly: out of this horrid tempeſt the awful voice of God was heard, all the people in the camp trembling, yea, and Moſes himſelf quaking for fear. This was the manner of the law's promulgation: but to ſuch a terrible diſpenſation as this we are not come, which is the negative part of our privilege.

2. He opens the poſitive privileges to which we are come.

(1.) Ye are come (ſaith he) to Mount Sion, not the earthly, but the ſpiritual Sion; Mount Sion was the place celebrated above all the world for the worſhip of God, [Pſal. lxxxvii. 7.] all my ſprings (ſaith God) are in thee. There was the temple, the ark of the covenant, the glory of the Lord dwelling between the cherubims. The prieſts that attended the ſervice of God had their reſidence there, as the angels have in heaven. Thither the tribes went up from all quarters of Judea, [Pſ. lxxxiv.] as the children of God do to heaven from all quarters of the world. Judea was the beſt kingdom in the world, Jeruſalem the beſt city in that kingdom, and Sion the moſt glorious place in that city. Here Chriſt taught his heavenly doctrine; near to it he finiſhed his glorious work of redemption. Hence the everlaſting goſpel went forth into all the world: and on theſe conſiderations it is put to ſignify the goſpel church or ſtate in this place, and is therefore called the Heavenly Jeruſalem in the following words. We do not come to the literal Sion, nor to the earthly Jeruſalem; but to the goſpel church or ſtate, which may be called a heaven upon earth, compared with that literal Jeruſalem.

(2.) Ye are come to an innumerable company of angels. Gr. to myriads of angels, a myriad is ten thouſand; but myriads in the plural number, and ſet down indefinitely

too

too, may note many millions of angels; and therefore we fitly render it to an innumerable company of angels. They had the miniſtry of angels as well as we, thouſands of them miniſtered to the Lord in the diſpenſation of the law, at Sinai, [Pſal. lxviii. 17.] but this, notwithſtanding, we are come to a much clearer knowledge both of their preſent miniſtry for us on earth, [Heb. xi. 14.] and of our fellowſhip and equality with them in heaven, [Luke xx. 36.]

(3.) Ye are come to the general aſſembly and church of the firſt born, whoſe names are written (or enrolled) in heaven. This alſo greatly commends and amplifies the privileges of New Teſtament believers; the church of God in former ages was circumſcribed, and ſhut up within the narrow limits of one ſmall kingdom, which was as a garden encloſed out of a waſte wilderneſs: but now by the calling in of the gentiles the church is extended far and wide, [Eph. iii. 5, 6.] It is become a great aſſembly, comprizing the believers of all nations under heaven; and ſo ſpeaking of them collectively, it is the general convention or aſſembly, which is alſo dignified and ennobled by two illuſtrious characters, viz. (1.) that it is the church of the firſt born, (i. e.) conſiſting of members dignified and privileged above others, as the firſt born among the Iſraelites did excell their younger brethren. (2.) That their names are written in heaven, (i. e.) regiſtered or enrolled in God's book as children and heirs of the heavenly inheritance, as the firſt born in Iſrael were regiſtered in order to the prieſthood, [Num. iii. 40, 41.]

(4.) Ye are come to God the judge of all. But why to God the judge? This ſeems to ſpoil the harmony, and jar with the parts of the diſcourſe. No, no; they are come to God as a righteous judge, who, as ſuch, will pardon them, [I. John i. 9.] crown them, [II. Tim. iv. 8.] and avenge them on all their oppreſſing and perſecuting enemies, [I. Theſ. i. 5—7.]

(5.) And the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. A moſt glorious privilege indeed, in which we are diſtinctly to conſider,

1. The quality of thoſe with whom we are aſſociated or taken into fellowſhip.

2. The way and manner of our aſſociation with them.

1. The quality of thoſe with whom we are aſſociated or to whom we are ſaid to be come, and they are deſcribed by three characters, viz. (1.) Spirits of men. (2.) Spirits of juſt men. (3.) Spirits of juſt men perfected or conſummated.

(1.) They are called ſpirits, that is, immaterial ſubſtances, ſtrictly oppoſed to bodies, which are no way the objects of our exterior ſenſes, neither viſible to the eye, nor ſenſible to the touch, which were called properly ſouls whilſt they animated bodies in this lower world; but now being looſed and ſeparated from them by death, and exiſting alone in the world above, they are properly and ſtrictly ſtiled ſpirits.

(2.) They are the ſpirits of juſt men. Man may be termed juſt two ways; (1.) By a full diſcharge and acquittance from the guilt of all his ſins, and ſo believers are juſt men even whilſt they live on earth, groaning under other imperfections, [Acts xiii. 39.] Or, (2.) By a total freedom from the pollution of any ſin. And though in this ſenſe there is not a juſt man upon earth, that doth good, and ſinneth not, [Eccleſ. vii. 22.] yet even in this ſenſe Adam was juſt before the fall, [Eccleſ. vii. 29.] according to his original conſtitution; and all believers are ſo in their glorified condition, all ſin being perfectly purged out of them, and its exiſtence utterly deſtroyed in them. On which account,

(3.) They are called the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, or conſummate. The word perfect is not here to be underſtood abſolutely, but ſynecdochically, they are not perfect in every reſpect, for one part of theſe juſt men lyes rotting in the grave; but they are perfected, for ſo much as concerns their ſpirit; though the fleſh periſh and lye in diſhonour, yet their ſpirits being once looſed from the body, and freed radically and perfectly from ſin, are preſently admitted to the facial viſion and fruition of God, which is the culminating point (as I may call it) higher than

than which the ſpirit of man aſpires not, and attaining to this it is, for ſo much as concerns itſelf, made perfect. Even as a body at laſt lodged in its centre, gravitates no more, but is at perfect reſt; ſo it is with the ſpirit of man come home to God in glory; it is now conſummate, no more need to be done to make it as perfectly happy as it is capable to be made, which is the firſt thing to be conſidered, viz. the quality of thoſe with whom we are aſſociated.

2. The ſecond follows, namely, the way and manner of our aſſociation with theſe bleſſed ſpirits of juſt men noted in this expreſſion, [we are come] he ſaith not, we ſhall come hereafter, when the reſurrection hath reſtored our bodies, or after the general judgement; but, we are come to theſe ſpirits of juſt men. The meaning whereof we may take up in theſe three particulars: (1.) We that live under the goſpel light, are come to a clearer apprehenſion, ſight, and knowledge of the bleſſed and happy eſtate of the ſouls of the righteous after death, than ever they had, or ordinarily could have, who lived under the types and ſhadows of the law, [Eph. iii. 4, 5.] And ſo we are come to them, in reſpect of clearer apprehenſion. (2.) We are come to thoſe bleſſed ſpirits in our repreſentative, Chriſt, who hath carried our nature into the very midſt of them, and whom they all behold with higheſt admiration and delight. By Chriſt, who is entered into that holy place where theſe ſpirits of juſt men live, we are come into a near relation with them; for he being the common head, both to them in heaven, and to us on earth, we and they conſequently make but one body or ſociety, [Eph. ii. 19.] whereupon (notwithſtanding the different and remote countries they and we live in) we are ſaid 'to ſit together with them in heavenly places,' [Eph. iii. 15. and ii. 6.] (3.) We are come; that is, we are as good as come, or we are upon the matter come; there remains nothing betwixt them and us but a puff of breath, a little ſpace of time, which ſhortens every moment; we are come to the very borders of their country, and there is nothing to ſpeak of betwixt them and us: and by this ex-

preſſion, we are come, he teacheth us to account and reckon thoſe things as preſent, which ſo ſhortly will be preſent to us, and to look upon them as if they already were, which is the higheſt and moſt comfortable life of faith we can live on earth. Hence the note is,

Doct. *That righteous and holy ſouls once ſeparated from their bodies by death, are immediately perfected in themſelves, and aſſociated with others alike perfect, in the kingdom of God*

That the ſpirits of juſt men at the time of their ſeparation from their bodies do not utterly fail in their beings, not that they are ſo prejudiced and wounded by death, that they cannot exert their own proper acts in the abſence of the body, hath been already cleared in the foregoing parts of this treatiſe, and will be more fully cleared from this text. But the true level and aim of this diſcourſe is at a higher mark, viz. the far more excellent, free and noble life the ſouls of the juſt begin to live immediately after their bodies are dropt off from them by death, at which time they begin to live like themſelves, a pleaſant, free, and divine life. So much at leaſt is included in the apoſtle's epithet in my text, ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; and ſuitable thereto are his words in I. Cor. xiii. 10, 12. 'When that which is perfect is come, then that which is 'in part ſhall be done away. For now we ſee through a 'glaſs darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, 'but then I ſhall know, even as I am known.' Theſe two adverbs, *now* and *then*, diſtinguiſh the twofold ſtate of gracious ſouls, and ſhew what it is whilſt they are confined in the body, and what it ſhall be from the time of their emancipation and freedom from that clog of mortality. Now we are imperfect, but then that which is perfect takes place, and that which is imperfect is done away, as the imperfect twilight is done away by the opening of the perfect day. And it deſerves a ſerious animadverſion, that this perfect ſtate doth not ſucceed the imperfect one after a long interval, (as long as betwixt the diſſolution and reſurrection of the body) but the imperfect ſtate of the ſoul is immediately done away by the coming of the perfect one.

The glaſs is laid by as uſeleſs, when we come to ſee face to face, and eye to eye.

The waters will prove very deep here, too deep for any line of mine to fathom; there is a cloud always overſhadowing the world to come, a gloom and hazineſs upon that ſtate; fain we would, with our weak and feeble beam of imperfect knowledge, penetrate this cloud, and diſpel this gloom and hazineſs, but cannot; we think ſeriouſly and cloſe to this great and awful ſubject, but our thoughts cannot pierce through it; we reinforce thoſe thoughts by a ſally or thick ſucceſſion of freſh thoughts, and yet all will not do, our thoughts return to us either in confuſion, or without the expected ſucceſs. For alas! how little is it that we know or can know of our own ſouls now whilſt they are embodied; much leſs of their unbodied ſtate! The apoſtle tells us, [I. Cor. ii. 9.] 'That eye hath 'not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the 'heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for 'them that love him.' And another apoſtle adds, 'It 'doth not yet appear what we ſhall be,' [I. John iii. 2.] Yet all this is no diſcouragement to the ſearch and regular inquiry into the future ſtate; for though reaſon cannot penetrate theſe myſteries, yet God hath revealed them to us (though not perfectly) by his Spirit. And though we know not (particularly and circumſtantially) what we ſhall be, yet this we know, that we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is. And it is our privilege and happineſs, that we are come to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, (i. e.) to a clearer knowledge of that ſtate than was ordinarily attainable by believers under former diſpenſations. Theſe things premiſed, I will proceed to open my apprehenſions of the ſeparate ſtate of the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, in twelve propoſitions: whereby, as by ſo many ſteps, we may orderly advance as far as ſafely and warrantably we may into the knowledge of this great myſtery, clearing what afterwards ſhall remain obſcure in the ſolution of ſeveral queſtions relating to this ſubject, and then apply the whole in ſeveral uſes of this great point: and the firſt propoſition is this,

Prop. I.

Prop. I. *There is a twofold ſeparation of the ſoul from the body; viz. one mental, and the other real: or,* 1. *Intellectual, by the mind only.* 2. *Phyſical, by the ſtroke of death.*

1. Of intellectual and mental ſeparation, I am firſt to ſpeak in this propoſition; and it is nothing elſe but an act of the underſtanding or mind, conceiving or conſidering the ſoul and body as ſeparated and parted each from other, whilſt yet they are united in a perſonal oneneſs by the breath of life. This mental ſeparation may and ought to be frequently and ſeriouſly made, before death makes the real and actual ſeparation; and the more frequently and ſeriouſly we do it, the leſs of horror and diſtraction will attend that real and fatal ſtroke whenever it ſhall be given. For hereby we learn to bear it gradually, and by gentle eſſays to acquaint our ſhoulders with the burden of it. Separation is a word that hath much of horror in the very ſound, and uſeth to have much more in the ſenſe and feeling of it, elſe it would not deſerve that title, [Job viii. 14.] 'The king of terrors,' or the moſt terrible of all terribles; but acquaintance and familiarity abates that horror, and that two ways eſpecially: (1.) As it is preventive of much guilt. (2.) As it gains a more inward knowledge of its nature.

(1.) The ſerious and the fixed thoughts of the parting hour is preventive of much guilt; and the greateſt part of the horror of death ariſes out of the guilt of ſin; 'The 'ſting of death is ſin,' [I. Cor. xv. 56.] Auguſtin ſaith, "Nothing more recals a man from ſin, than the frequent meditation of death." I dare not ſay it is the ſtrongeſt of all curbs to keep us back from ſin, but I am ſure it is a very ſtrong one. Let a ſoul but ſeriouſly meditate what a change death will make ſhortly upon his perſon and condition; and the natural effects of ſuch a meditation, through the bleſſing of God upon it, will be a flatting and quenching of its keen and raging appetite after the enſnaring vanities of this world (which draw men into ſo much guilt) a conſcientious fear of ſin, and an awakened care of duty. It was once demanded of a very holy

man,

man (who ſpent much more than the ordinary allowance of time in prayer, and ſearching his own heart) why he ſo macerated his own body by ſuch frequent and long-continued duties? His anſwer was, "O I muſt die, I muſt die:" nothing could ſeparate him from duty, who had already ſeparated his ſoul from his body, and all this world by fixed and deep thoughts of death.

(2.) Hereby we gain a more inward knowledge and acquaintance with the nature of death; and the more we are acquainted with it, the leſs it terrifies us. A lion is much more dreadful to him that never ſaw him, than he is to his keeper who feedeth him every day. A pitched battle is more frightful and ſcaring to a new-liſted ſoldier that never took his place in the field before, nor ſaw the dreadful countenance of an army ready to engage, nor heard the thundering noiſe of cannon, and vollies of ſhot, the ſhouts of armies, and groans of dying men on every ſide, than it is to an old ſoldier who hath been uſed to ſuch things. The like we may obſerve in ſeamen, who, it may be, trembled at firſt, and now can ſing in a ſtorm. Scarce any thing is more neceſſary for weak and timorous believers to meditate on, than the time of their ſeparation. Our hearts will be apt to ſtart at the firſt view of death, but it is good to do by them as men uſed to do by young colts; ride them up to that which they fright at, and make them ſmell to it, which is the way to cure them. Look, as bread (ſaith one) is more neceſſary than other food, ſo the meditation of death is more neceſſary than many other meditations. Every time we change our habitations, we ſhould realize therein our great change. Our ſouls muſt ſhortly leave this, and be lodged for a longer ſeaſon in another manſion. When we put off our cloaths at night, we have a fit occaſion to conſider, that we muſt ſtrip nearer one of theſe days, and put off not our cloaths only, but the body that wears them too.

Holy Job had by frequent thoughts familiarized death and the grave to himſelf, and could ſpeak of them, as men uſe to ſpeak of their houſes and deareſt relations,

[Job

[Job xvii. 14.] 'I have ſaid to corruption, Thou art my 'father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and ſiſter.' But it needs much grace to hold the heart to this work, and therefore Moſes begs it of God, [Pſal. xc. 12.] 'So 'teach us to number our days;' and David, [Pſal. xxxix. 4.] 'Lord, make me to know my end.' Yea, the advantages of it have been acknowledged by men whoſe light was leſs, and diverſions more than ours. The Jews for this uſe and end had their ſepulchres built beforehand, and that in their gardens of pleaſure too, that they might ſeaſon the delights of life with the frequent thoughts of death, [John xix. 41.] Philip of Macedon would be awakened by his page, every morning with this ſentence, "Remember, O King, thou art a mortal man!" A great Emperor of Conſtantinople, not only at his inauguration, but at his great feaſts, ordered a maſon to bring two ſtones before him, and ſay, "Chuſe, O Emperor, which of the two thou wilt have for thy tomb-ſtone." Reader, thou wilt find mental ſeparation much eaſier than real ſeparation.—It is eaſier to think of death than it is to feel it; and the more we think of it, the leſs we are like to feel it.

Prop. II. *Actual ſeparation may be conſidered either* in fieri, *in the previous pangs and foregoing agonies of it*; *or* in facto eſſe, *in the laſt ſeparating ſtroke which actually parts the ſoul and body aſunder, lays the body proſtrate and dead at the feet of death, and thruſts the ſoul quite out of its ancient and beloved habitation.*

1. Let it then be conſidered in the previous pangs and forerunning agonies which commonly make way for this actual diſſolution: and to the people of God, this is the worſt and bittereſt part of death, (except thoſe conflicts with Satan which they ſometimes grapple with on a death-bed) which they encounter at that time. There is (ſaith one) no poniard in death itſelf like thoſe in the way or prologue to it. I like not to die (ſaid another) but I care not if I were dead; the end is better than the way. The conflicts and ſtruggles of nature with death are bitter and ſharp; pains unknown to men before, whatever pains they have endured; nor can it be expected to be other-

otherwiſe, ſeeing the ties and engagements betwixt the ſoul and body are ſo ſtrong, as we ſhewed before. The ſoul will not eaſily part with the body, but diſputes the paſſage with death from member to member, (like reſolute ſoldiers in a ſtormed garriſon) till at laſt it is forced to yield up the fort royal into the hands of victorious death, and leave the dearly beloved body a captive to it. This is the dark ſide of death to all good men; and though it be not worth naming, in compariſon with the dreadful conſequence of death to all others, yet in itſelf it is terrible. Separation is not natural to the ſoul, which was created with an inclination to the body; it is natural indeed to claſp and embrace, to love and cheriſh its own body; but to be divided from it, is grievous and preternatural. The agonies of death are expreſſed in ſcripture by a word which ſignifies the travailing pains of a woman; yea, by the ſharpeſt and moſt acute pains they feel, even the birth-pangs, or bearing-throes, [Acts ii. 24.] And yet all are not handled alike roughly by the hands of death; ſome are favoured with a deſireable εὐθανασία, gentle and eaſy one. It is the privilege of ſome Chriſtians to have their ſouls fetched out of their bodies as it were by a kiſs from the mouth of God, as the Jewiſh rabbies uſed to expreſs the manner of Moſes' death. Mr. Bolton felt no pain at his death, but the cold hand of his friend who aſked him what pain he felt. Yea, holy Bayneham, in the midſt of the flames, profeſſed it was to him as a bed of roſes. Every believer is equally freed from the ſting and curſe of death; but every one is not equally favoured in the agonies and pains of death.

2. Separation from the body is to be conſidered *in facto eſſe*, (i. e.) in the reſult and iſſue of all theſe bitter pangs and agonies, which end in the actual diſſolution of ſoul and body. Death, or actual ſeparation, is nothing elſe but the dividing of the tie, or looſing of the bond of union betwixt the ſoul and body. Some call it the privation of the ſecond act of the ſoul, that is, its act of informing or enlivening the body. Others, according to ſcripture-phraſe, the departing of the ſoul from the body. So Pe-

ter ſtiles it, [II. Pet. i. 15.] 'after my departure;' (i. e.) after my death. Auguſtine calls it the laying down of a heavy burden, provided there be not another burden for the ſoul to bear afterwards, which will ſink it into hell.—In reſpect of the body, which the ſoul now forſakes, it is called the 'putting off this tabernacle,' [II. Pet. i. 14.] and the diſſolving the earthly houſe or tabernacle, [II. Cor. v. 1.] In reſpect of the *terminus à quo*, the place from which the ſoul removes at death, it is called our departure hence, [Phil. i. 23.] or our weighing anchor, and looſing from this coaſt or ſhore to ſail to another. In reſpect of the *terminus ad quem*, the place to which the ſpirits of the juſt go at death, it is called our going to, or being with the Lord, *ibid.* To conclude; in reſpect of that which doth moſt livelily reſemble and ſhadow it forth, it is called our 'falling aſleep,' [Acts vii. ult.] our 'ſleeping in Jeſus,' [I. Theſſ. iv. 14.] This metaphor of ſleep muſt be ſtretched no farther than the Spirit of God deſigned in the choice of it, which was not to favour or countenance the fancy of a ſleeping ſoul after death; but to repreſent its ſtate of placid reſt in Jeſus's boſom, if it refer at all to the ſoul; for I think it moſt properly reſpects the body; and thence the ſepulchres where the bodies of the ſaints were laid, got the name of dormitories, or ſleeping-places. This is its laſt farewel to this world, never to return to a low animal life more: [Job vii. 9, 10.] 'For 'as the cloud is conſumed and vaniſhed away, ſo he that 'goeth down to the grave ſhall come up no more; he ſhall 'return no more to his houſe, neither ſhall his place know 'him any more.' The ſoul is no more bound to a body, nor a retainer to ſun, moon, or ſtars, to meat, drink, and ſleep, but is become a free, ſingle, abſtracted being, a ſeparate and pure ſpirit, which the Latins call lemures, manes, ghoſts, or ſouls of the dead, and my text 'Spirits 'made perfect,' a being much like unto the angels, who are bodileſs powers. An angel, as one ſpeaks, is a perfect ſoul, a ſoul is an imperfect angel. I do not ſay that upon their ſeparation they become angels; for they will ſtill remain a diſtinct ſpecies of ſpirits. Angels have no inclination

nation to bodies, nor were ever fettered with clogs of fleſh as ſouls were. And by this you ſee what a difference there is betwixt theſe two conſiderations of death. How ghaſtly and affrighting is it in its preſent pangs! How lovely and deſirable in the iſſue and reſult of them! Which is but the change of earth for heaven, men for God, ſin and miſery for perfection and glory.

Prop. III. *The ſeparation of the ſoul and body makes a great and wonderful change upon both, but eſpecially upon the ſoul.*

There is a twofold change made upon man by death, one upon his body, another upon his ſoul. The change upon the body is great and viſible to every eye. A living body is changed into a dead carcaſs; a beautiful and comely body into a loathſome ſpectacle. That which lately was the object of delight and love, is hereby made an abhorrence to all fleſh: 'Bury my dead out of my ſight,' [Gen. xxiii. 4.] What the ſun is to the greater, that the ſoul is to the leſſer world. When the ſun ſhines comfortably, how cheerful do all things look! How well do they thrive and proſper! The birds ſing merrily, the beaſts play wantonly, the whole creation enjoyeth a day of light and joy; but when it departs, what a night of horror followeth! How are all things wrapped up in the ſable mantle of darkneſs! Or if it but abate its heat, as in winter, the creatures are as it were buried in the winding-ſheet of winter's froſt and ſnow: juſt ſo it is with the body, when the ſoul ſhineth pleaſantly upon it, or departs from it. That body which was fed ſo aſſiduouſly, cared for ſo anxiouſly, loved ſo paſſionately, is now tumbled into a pit, and left to the mercy of crawling worms. The change which judgement made upon that great and flouriſhing city Niniveh, is a fit emblem to ſhadow forth that change which death makes upon human bodies. That great and renowned city was once full of people which thronged the ſtreets thereof: there you might have ſeen children playing upon the threſholds, beauties ſhewing themſelves through the windows, melody ſounding in its palaces; but what an alteration was made upon it the

Prophet Zephaniah deſcribes, chap. ii. 14. 'Flocks 'ſhall lie down in the midſt of her; all the beaſts of the 'nations, both the cormorant and the bittern, ſhall lodge 'in the upper lintels of it; their voice ſhall ſing in the 'windows, deſolation ſhall be in the threſholds; for he 'ſhall uncover the cedar-work.' Thus it is with the body when death hath diſlodged the ſoul. Worms neſtle in the holes, where the beautiful eyes were once placed; corruption and deſolation is upon all parts of that ſtately ſtructure. But this being a vulgar theme, I ſhall leave the body to the duſt from whence it came, and follow the ſoul, which is my proper ſubject, pointing at the changes which are made upon it.

The eſſence of the ſoul is not deſtroyed or changed by the body's ruin; it is ſubſtantially the ſelf-ſame ſoul that it was when in the body. The ſuppoſition of an eſſential change would diſorder the whole frame and model of God's eternal deſign for the redemption and glorification of it, [Rom. viii. 29, 30.] but though it undergo no ſubſtantial change at death, yet divers great and remarkable alterations are made upon it by ſundering it from the body. As, 1. It is not where it was: it was in a body immerſed in matter, married unto fleſh and blood; but now it is out of the body, uncloathed, and ſtripped naked out of its garments of fleſh, like pure gold melted out of the ore with which it was commixed; or as a bird let out of her cage into the open fields and woods. This makes a great and wonderful change on it. 2. Being free from the body, it is conſequently diſcharged and freed from all thoſe cares, ſtudies, fears, and ſorrows to which it was here enthralled and ſubjected upon the body's account. It puts off all thoſe paſſions and burdens with it, never ſpends one thought more about food and raiment, health and ſickneſs, wives and children, riches or poverty; but lives henceforth after the manner of angels, [Matt. xxii. 30.] It is now unrelated to, and therefore unconcerned about all theſe things. 3. In the unbodied ſtate it is perfectly freed from ſin, both in the acts and habits; a mercy it never enjoyed ſince the firſt moment it dwelt in

the body. The cure of this diſeaſe was indeed begun in the work of ſanctification, but is not perfected till the day of the ſoul's glorification. It is now, and not till now, a ſpirit made perfect; that is, a ſoul enjoying its perfect health and rectitude: no more groans, tears, or lamentations upon the account of indwelling ſin. 4. The way and manner of its converſe with, and enjoyment of God, is changed. There are two mediums by which ſouls converſe with God in the body, viz. (1.) one internal, (2.) the other external.

(1.) If a man walk with God on earth, it muſt be in the uſe and exerciſe of faith, [II. Cor. v. 7.] nor can there be any communion carried on betwixt God and the ſoul without it, [Heb. xi. 6.] (2.) The external mediums are the ordinances of God, or duties of religion, both public and private, [Pſal. lxiii. 2.] Betwixt theſe two mediums of communion with God, this remarkable difference is found: the ſoul may ſee and enjoy God by faith, in the want or abſence of ordinances; but there is no ſeeing or converſing with God in the greateſt plenty and purity of ordinances, without faith, [Heb. iv. 2.] But in the ſame moment the ſoul is cut off from union with the body, it is alſo cut off from both theſe ways of enjoying God, [I. Cor. xiii. 12.—Iſa. xxxviii. 11.] but yet the ſoul is no loſer, nay, it is the greateſt gainer by this change. The child is no loſer by ceaſing to derive its nouriſhment by the navel, when it comes to receive it by the mouth; a more noble way, whereby it gets a new pleaſure in taſting the variety of all delectable food. Hezekiah bemoaned the loſs of ordinances upon his ſuppoſed death-bed, ſaying, "I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living:" q. d. Now farewel temple and ordinances; I ſhall never go any more into his temple, where my ſoul hath been ſo often cheered and refreſhed with the diſplays of his grace and goodneſs; I ſhall never more join with the aſſembly of his people on earth. And ſuppoſe he had not, ſure he would have loſt nothing, had he then exchanged the temple at Jeruſalem, for the temple in heaven, and communion with ſinful, imperfect

perfect ſaints in earth, for fellowſhip with angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. By this change we loſe no more than he loſeth, who, whilſt he ſtands delightfully contemplating the image of his deareſt friend in a glaſs, hath the glaſs ſnatched away by his friend whom he now ſeeth face to face.

Upon this change of the mediums of communion it will follow, that the communion betwixt God and the ſeparate ſouls excels all the communion it ever had with him on earth, in, (1.) The clearneſs. (2.) The ſweetneſs. (3.) The conſtancy of it. (1.) Its viſions of God in the ſtate of ſeparation are more clear, diſtinct, and direct, than they were on earth; clouds and ſhadows are now fled away. The ſoul now ſeeth as it is ſeen, and knoweth as it is known; its apprehenſions of God there differ from thoſe it had here, as the crude and confuſed apprehenſions of a child do from thoſe we have in the manly ſtate. (2.) They are alſo more ſweet and raviſhing. As our viſions are, ſo are our pleaſures: perfect viſions produce perfect pleaſures. The faculties of the ſoul now, and never till now, lye level to that rule, [Matt. xxii. 37.] The viſions of God command and call forth all the heart and ſoul, mind and ſtrength, into acts of love and delight. It was not ſo here, if the ſpirit was willing, the fleſh was weak; but there the clog is off from the foot of the will. (3.) More conſtant, fixed, and ſteady. It is one of the greateſt difficulties in religion, to fix the thoughts, and cure the wildneſs and rovings of the fancy. The heart is not ſteady with God, and hence are its ups and downs, heatings and coolings, which are things unknown in the perfect ſtate. By all which it appears, the change by diſſolution is great and marvellous both upon body and ſoul, but upon the ſoul more eſpecially.

Prop. IV. *The ſouls of the righteous, at the inſtant of their ſeparation, are received by the bleſſed angels, and by them tranſferred unto the place of bleſſedneſs.*

Though angels are by nature a ſuperior order of ſpirits, differing from men in dignity, as the nobles and barons

barons in the kingdoms of this world differ from inferiour ſubjects; yet are they made miniſtering ſpirits, (*i. e.*) ſerviceable creatures in the kingdom of Providence to the meaneſt of the ſaints, [Heb. i. 14.] and herein the Lord puts a ſingular honour upon his people, in making ſuch excellent creatures as angels ſerviceable to them. Luther aſſigns to them a double office, to ſing the praiſe of God on high, and to watch over his ſaints here below. Their miniſtry is diſtinguiſhed into three branches: [Νουθετικὸν,] for admonition or warning; [Φυλακτικὸν,] for protection and defence; [Βοηθητικὸν,] for ſuccour, help, and comfort. This laſt office they perform more eſpecially at the ſoul's departure. Like tender nurſes, they keep us whilſt we live, and bring us home in their arms to our father's houſe when we die.

They are about our death-beds, waiting to receive their precious charge into their arms and boſoms. When Lazarus breathed out his ſoul, the text ſaith, it was 'carried by angels into Abraham's boſom,' [Luke xvi. 22.] And upon this account, Tertullian calls them the 'callers "forth of ſouls." At the tranſlation of Elijah they appeared in the form of horſes and chariots of fire, [II. Kings ii. 11.] Horſes and chariots are not only deſigned for conveyance, but for conveyance in ſtate; and truly it is no ſmall honor to have ſuch a noble convoy and guard to attend our ſouls to heaven.

Object. If it be demanded, *What need is there of their help or company? cannot God by his immediate hand and power gather home the ſouls of his people to himſelf at death? He inſpired them into our bodies without their help, and can receive them again when we expire them, without their aid.*

Sol. True, he can do ſo; but it hath pleaſed him to appoint this method of our tranſlation, not out of mere neceſſity, but bounty. Souls aſcend not to God in the virtue of the angels wings or arms, but of Chriſt's aſcenſion. Had not he aſcended as our head and repreſentative, all the angels in heaven could not have brought our ſouls thither. He aſcended by his own power, and we aſcend by the virtue

tue of his aſcenſion. It is therefore rather for the ſtate and decorum, than any abſolute neceſſity, that they attend us in our aſcenſion. God will not only have his people brought home to him ſafely, but honourably. They ſhall come to their father's houſe in a becoming equipage, as the children of a king. This puts honour upon our aſcenſion-day, that day is adorned by the attendance of ſuch illuſtrious creatures upon us. It is no ſmall honour which God herein deſigns for us, that creatures of greater dignity than ourſelves ſhall be ſent from heaven to attend and wait upon us thither. Yea, that our aſcenſion-day ſhould in this reſemble Chriſt's aſcenſion, is an honour indeed. When he aſcended, there were multitudes of theſe heavenly creatures to wait upon him, [Pſal. lxviii. 17, 18.] 'The chariots of God are twenty thouſand, 'even thouſands of angels; the Lord is among them as in 'Sinai, in the holy place. Thou haſt aſcended on high,' &c. A cloud was prepared as a royal chariot, to carry up the king of glory to his princely pavilion, and then a royal guard of mighty angels to wait upon his chariot; if not for ſupport, yet for the greater ſtate and ſolemnity of their Lord's aſcenſion. And O what jubilations of bleſſed angels were heard that day in heaven! how was the whole city of God moved at his coming! the triumph is not ended to this day, no, nor never ſhall. Now herein God greatly honours his people, that there ſhall be ſome reſemblance and conformity betwixt their aſcenſion and Chriſt's; angels rejoice to attend thoſe to heaven, who muſt be their fellow citizens for ever in heaven! It is convenient alſo, that thoſe who had the charge of us all our life, ſhould attend us to our father's houſe at our death. In the one they finiſh their miniſtry, in the other they begin their more intimate ſociety. Moreover, the angels are they whom God will employ to gather together his elect from the four winds of heaven at the great day, [Matt. xxiv. 31.] And who more fit to attend their ſpirits to heaven ſingly, than thoſe who muſt collect them into one body at laſt. and wait upon that collective body when they ſhall be brought to Chriſt? [Pſal. xlv. 14.]

Object.

Object. *But the ſight and preſence of angels is exceeding awful and overwhelming to human nature: it will rather aſtoniſh and terrify, than refreſh and cheer us, to find ourſelves all on a ſudden ſurrounded and beſet with ſuch majeſtic creatures. We ſee what effects the appearance of an angel hath had upon good men in this world. 'We ſhall die, (ſaid Manoah) for 'we have ſeen God,'* [*Judg.* xiii. 22.] *So Eliphaz, 'a ſpi-'rit paſſed before my face, the hair of my fleſh ſtood up,'* [*Job* iv. 15.]

Sol. True, whilſt our ſouls inhabit thoſe mortal and ſinful bodies, the appearances of angels is terrible to them, and cannot be otherwiſe, partly upon a natural, and partly upon a moral account. The dread of angels naturally falls upon our animal ſpirits; they ſhrink and tremble at the approach of ſpirits; not only the ſpirits of men, but of beaſts do ſo. A dog or a horſe is terrified at it, as well as a man, [Numb. xxii. 25.] The dread of ſpirits ſtrikes the animal or natural ſpirits primarily; and the mind or rational ſoul by conſent. There is alſo another cauſe of fear in man upon the ſight or preſence of angels, viz. a conſciouſneſs of guilt. Whereever there is guilt, there will be fear, eſpecially upon any extraordinary appearance of God to us, though it be but mediately by an angel. But when the ſoul is freed both from fleſh and ſin, and ſhall enjoy itſelf in a nature like to theſe pure and holy ſpirits, the dread of angels is then vaniſhed, and the ſoul will take great content and ſatisfaction in their company and communion. The ſoul then finds itſelf a fit companion for them, looks upon them as its fellow-ſervants; for ſo they are, [Rev. xix. 10.] And the angels look upon the ſpirits of juſt men, not as inferiors and underlings, but with great reſpect, as ſpirits in ſome ſenſe nearer to Chriſt than themſelves. So that henceforth no dread falls upon us from the preſence of theſe excellent creatures; but each enjoyeth ſingular delight in each other's ſociety. And thus we ſee in what honourable and pleaſing company the ſouls of the juſt go hence to their father's houſe and boſom.

Prop. V. *The ſoul is not ſo maimed and prejudiced by its ſeparation from the body, but that it both can and doth live and act without it; and performs the acts of cogitation and volition without the aid and miniſtry of the body.*

I know it is objected by them that aſſert the ſoul's ſleeping till the reſurrection, that though its eſſence be not deſtroyed by death, yet its operations are obſtructed by the want and abſence of the body, its tool and inſtrument: and thus they form their objection.

Object. *All that the ſoul underſtands, it underſtands by ſpecies; that is, the images of things which are firſt formed in the phantaſy: as when we would conceive the nature of a houſe, a ſhip, a man, or a beaſt; we firſt form the image or ſpecies thereof in our fancy, and then exerciſe our thoughts about it; but this depending upon bodily organs and inſtruments, the ſeparated ſoul can form no ſuch images. It hath no ſuch innate ſpecies of its own, but comes into the world an* abraſa tabula, *white paper; and being deprived by ſeparation of the help of ſenſes and phantaſms, it conſequently underſtands nothing.* Thus the ſoul in its ſtate of ſeparation is repreſented to us as wounded in its powers and operations, to that degree which ſeems to extinguiſh the very nature of it. But,

Sol. 1. We deny that the ſoul knows nothing now but by phantaſms and images; for it knows itſelf, its own nature and powers, of which it cannot poſſibly feign or form any image or repreſentation. What form, ſhape, or figure, can the fancy of a man caſt his own ſoul into to help him to underſtand its nature? And what ſhall we ſay of its underſtanding during an ecſtaſy or rapture? Doth the ſoul know nothing at ſuch a time? Doth a dull torpor ſeize and benumb its intellectual powers? No, the underſtanding is never more bright, clear, apprehenſive, and perfect than when the body in an ecſtaſy is laid aſide as to any uſe or aſſiſtance of the mind. The ſoul for that ſpace uſes not the body's aſſiſtance, as the very words ecſtaſy and rapture convince us.

2. To underſtand by ſpecies doth not agree to the ſoul naturally and neceſſarily, but by accident, as it is now in union with the body: were it but once looſed from

the body, it would underſtand better without them than ever it did in the body by them. A man that is on horſe-back muſt move according to the motion of the horſe he rides; but if he were on foot, he then uſes his own proper motion as he pleaſeth; ſo here. But though we grant the ſoul doth in many caſes now make uſe of phantaſms, and that the agitation of the ſpirits, which are in the brain and heart, are conjunct with its acts of cogitation and intellection; yet, as a ſearching ſcholar well obſerves, the ſpirits are rather ſubjects than inſtruments of thoſe actions; and the whole eſſence of thoſe acts is antecedent to the motion of the ſpirits; as when we uſe a pen in writing, or a knife in cutting, there is an operation of the ſoul upon them, before there can be any operation by them. They act as they are firſt acted, and ſo do theſe bodily ſpirits. So that to ſpeak properly, the body is bettered by the uſe the ſoul makes of it in theſe its noble actions; but the ſoul is not advantaged by being tied to ſuch a body, it can do its own work without it, its operations follow its eſſence, not the body to which it is for a time united. In ſum, it is much more difficult to conceive a ſtupified, benumbed, and unactive ſoul, whoſe very nature it is to be active, lively, and always in motion, than it is to conceive a ſoul freed from the ſhackles and clogs of the body, acting freely according to its own nature. I wiſh the favourers of this opinion may take heed, leſt it carry them farther than they intend, even to a denial of its exiſtence and immortality, and turn them into downright Somatiſts or Atheiſts.

Prop. VI. *That the ſeparated ſouls of the juſt, having finiſhed all their work of obedience on earth, and the ſpirit having finiſhed all his work of ſanctification upon them, they do aſcend to God with all the habits of grace inherent in them; and all the comfortable improvements of their graces accompanying and following them.* This propoſition is to be opened and confirmed in theſe four branches:

(1.) When a gracious ſoul is ſeparated from the body, all its work of obedience in this world is finiſhed; therefore death is called the 'finiſhing of our courſe.' [Acts xx. 24.]

the night cometh when man works no more; [John ix. 4.] There is no working in the grave, [Eccleſ. ix. 10.] for death diſſolves the *compoſitum*, and removes the ſoul immediately to another world, where it can act for itſelf only, but not for others, as it was wont to do on earth, 'I 'ſhall ſee man no more (ſaith Hezekiah) with the in-'habitants of the world,' [Iſa. xxxviii. 11.] That which was ſaid of David's death, is as true of every Chriſtian, that 'having ſerved his generation according to the will 'of God, he fell aſleep,' [Acts xiii. 36.] I do not ſay this lower world receives no benefit at all by them after their death; for though they can ſpeak no more, write no more, pray for, and inſtruct the inhabitants of this world no more, nor exhibit to them the beauty of religion in any new acts or examples of theirs, (which is that I mean by ſaying they have finiſhed all their work of obedience on earth) yet the benefit of what they did whilſt in the body, ſtill remains after they are gone; as the apoſtle ſpeaks of Abel, [Heb. xi. 4.] 'Who being dead, yet ſpeaketh.'—This way indeed abundance of ſervice will be done for the ſouls of men upon earth, long after they are gone to heaven. And this ſhould greatly quicken us to leave as much as we can behind us for the good of poſterity, that 'after 'our deceaſe,' (as the apoſtle ſpeaks, II. Pet. i. 15.) they may have our words and examples in remembrance. But for any ſervice to be done *de novo*, after death, it is not to be expected. We have accompliſhed as a hireling our day, and have not a ſtroke more to do.

(2.) As all our work of obedience is then finiſhed by us, ſo at death all the work of God is finiſhed by his Spirit upon us. The laſt hand is then put to all the preparatory work for glory, not a ſtroke more to be done upon it afterward; which appears as well by the immediate ſucceſſion of the life of glory, (whereof I ſhall ſpeak in another propoſition) as by the ceſſation of all ſanctifying means and inſtruments, which are totally laid aſide as things of no more uſe after this ſtroke is given; means are uſeleſs, when the end is attained. 'There is no work '(ſaith Solomon) in the grave.' How ſhort ſoever the

ſoul's

ſoul's ſtay and abode in the body was, though it were regenerated one day, and ſeparated the next, yet all is wrought upon it, which God ever intended ſhould be wrought upon it in this world, and there is no preparation-work in the other world.

(3.) But though the ſoul leaves all the means of grace behind it, yet it carries away with it to heaven all thoſe habits of grace which were planted and improved in it in this world, by the bleſſing of the Spirit upon thoſe means: though it leave the ordinances, it loſeth not the effects and fruits of them; though they ceaſe, their effects ſtill live. 'The truth dwelleth in us, and 'ſhall be for ever,' [I. John ii. 17.] 'The ſeed 'of God remaineth in us,' [I. John iii. 9.]—Common gifts fail at death, but ſaving grace ſticks faſt in the ſoul, and aſcends with it into glory. Gracious habits are inſeparable; glory doth not deſtroy but perfect them. They are the ſoul's meetneſs for heaven, [Col. i. 12.] and therefore it ſhall not come into his preſence, leaving its meetneſs behind it. In vain is all the work of the Spirit upon us in this world, if we carry it not along with us into that world, ſeeing all his works upon us in this life have a reſpect and relation to the life to come. Look, therefore, as the ſame natural faculties and powers which the ſoul had (though it could not uſe them) in its imperfect body in the womb, came with it into this world, where they freely exerted themſelves in the moſt noble actions of natural life; ſo the habits of grace, which by regeneration are here implanted in a weak and imperfect ſoul, go with it to glory, where they exert themſelves in a more high and perfect way of acting than ever they did here below. The languiſhing ſpark of love is there a vehement flame; the faint, remiſs, and infrequent delight in God is there at a conſtant, raviſhing, and tranſporting height.

(4.) To conclude; as all implanted habits of grace aſcend with the ſanctified ſoul to heaven; for the ſoul aſcends not thither as a natural, but as a new creature, ſo all the effects, reſults, and ſweet improvements of thoſe graces

graces which we gathered as the pleaſant fruits of them on earth, theſe accompany and follow the ſoul into the other world alſo; 'Their works follow them,' [Rev. xiv. 13.] They go not before in the notion of merits to make way for them, but they follow or accompany them as evidences and comfortable experiences. I doubt not but the very remembrance of what paſſed betwixt God and the ſoul here, betwixt the day of its eſpouſals to Chriſt, and its divorce from the body, will be one ſweet ingredient into their bleſſedneſs and joy, when they ſhall be ſinging in the upper region the ſong of Moſes and of the Lamb. They were never given to be loſt or left behind us. And thus you ſee with what a rich cargo the ſoul ſails to the other world, though if it had no other, it would never drop anchor there.

Prop. VII. *The ſouls of the juſt, when ſeparated from their bodies, do not wander up and down this world, nor hover about the ſepulchres where their bodies lie; nor are they detained in any purgatory, in order to their more perfect purification; nor do they fall aſleep in a benumbed, ſtupid ſtate: but do forthwith paſs into glory, and are immediately with the Lord.* When once the mind of man leaves the ſcripture guidance and direction, which is to it what the compaſs or pole-ſtar is to a ſhip in the wide ocean, whither will it not wander? In what uncertainties will it not fluctuate? And upon what rocks and quickſands muſt it inevitably be caſt?—Many have been the fooliſh and groundleſs conceits and fancies of men about the receptacles of departed ſouls.

1. Some have aſſigned them a reſtleſs, wandering life; now here, now there, without any certain dwelling-place any where. The only ground for this fancy is the frequent apparitions of the ghoſts or ſpirits of the dead; whereof many inſtances are given; and who is there that is a ſtranger to ſuch ſtories? Now if departed ſouls were fixed any where, this world would be quiet and free from ſuch diſturbances. I make no doubt but very many of theſe ſtories have been the induſtrious fictions and devices of wicked and ſuperſtitious votaries to gain reputation to their way, ſpeaking lies in hypocriſy to draw diſciples after them.

them. And many others have been the tricks and impoſtures of Satan himſelf to ſhake the credit of the ſaints reſt in heaven, and the impriſonment of ungodly ſouls in hell, as will more fully appear when I come to ſpeak to that queſtion more particularly. 2. Others think, when they are looſed from the body at death, they hover about the graves and ſolitary places where their bodies lie, as willing, ſeeing they can dwell no longer in them, to abide as near them as they can; juſt as the ſurviving turtle keeps near the place where his mate died, and may be heard mourning for a long time about that part of the wood. This opinion ſeeks countenance and protection from that law, [Deut. xviii. 10, 11.] which prohibits men to conſult with the dead; of which reſtraint there had been no need nor uſe if it had not been practiſed; and ſuch practices had never been continued, if departed ſouls had not frequented thoſe places, and given anſwers to their queſtions. But what I ſaid before of Satan's impoſtures is enough for the preſent to return to this alſo.— 3. The Papiſts ſend them immediately to purgatory, in order to their more thorough purification. This purgatory Bellarmine thus deſcribes: "It is a certain place, wherein, as in a priſon, ſouls are purged after this life, that were not fully purged here, to the intent they may enter pure into heaven; and though the church hath not defined the place, yet the ſchoolmen ſay, it is in the bowels of the earth, and upon the borders of hell." And to countenance this profitable fable, divers ſcriptures are by them abuſed and miſapplied, as I. Cor. iii. 15.—Matt. v. 25, 26.—I. Pet. iii. 19. all which have been fully reſcued out of their hands, and abundantly vindicated by our divines, who have proved God never kindled that fire to purify ſouls, but the Pope to warm his own kitchen. 4. Another ſort there are, who affirm, they neither wander about this world, nor go into purgatory, but are caſt by death into a ſwoon or ſleep; remaining in a kind of benumbed condition till the reſurrection of the body. This was the error of Beryllus, and Ireneus ſeems to border too near upon it, when he ſaith, "The ſouls of diſciples ſhall go

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to an invisible place appointed for them of God, and shall there tarry till the resurrection, waiting for that time, and then receiving their bodies; and perfectly (i. e. corporeally) rising again, as Christ did, they shall come to the sight of God."

All these mistakes will fall together by one stroke; for if it evidently appear (as I hope it will) that the spirits of the just are immediately taken to God, and do converse with and enjoy him in heaven; then all these fancies vanish, without any more labour about them particularly. Now there are four considerations which to me put the immediate glorification of the departed souls of believers beyond all rational doubt. 1. Heaven is as ready and fit to receive them, as ever it shall be. 2. They are as ready and fit for heaven, as ever they shall be. 3. The scripture is plainly for it. And, 4. There is nothing in reason against it.

1. Heaven is as ready and fit to receive them when they die, as ever it shall be. Heaven is prepared for believers, (1.) By the purpose and decree of God, and so far it was prepared from the foundation of the world, [Matt. xxv. 34.] (2.) By the death of Christ, whose blood made the purchase of it for believers, and so meritoriously opened the gates thereof, which our sins had barred up against us. [Heb. x. 19, 20.] (3.) By the ascension of Christ into that holy place, as our representative and forerunner, [Job xiv. 2.] This is all that is necessary to be done for the preparation of heaven; and all this is done, as much as ever God designed should be done to it, in order to its preparation for our souls; so that no delay can be upon that account. 2. The departed souls of believers are as ready for heaven as ever they shall be. For there is no preparation-work to be done by them, or upon them after death, [John ix. 3.—Eccles. ix. 10.] Their justification was complete before death, and now their sanctification will be so too; sin, which came in by the union, going out at the separation of their souls and bodies. They are 'Spirits made perfect.' 3. The scripture is plain and full for their immediate glorification;

[Luke

[Luke xxiii. 43.] 'To day ſhalt thou be with me in pa-
'radiſe.' [Luke xvi. 22.] 'The beggar died, and was
'carried by the angels into Abraham's boſom.' [Phil. i.
21.] 'I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt,
'which is far better.' The ſcripture ſpeaks but of two ways, by which ſouls ſee and enjoy God, viz. faith and ſight; the one imperfect, ſuited to this life; the other perfect, fitted for the life to come; and this immediately ſucceeding that, for the imperfect is done away by the coming of that which is perfect, as the twilight is done away by the advancing of the perfect day. 4. To conclude; there is nothing in reaſon lying in bar to it. It hath been proved before, that the ſoul in its embodied ſtate is capable to enjoy bleſſedneſs, and can perform its acts of intellect, volition, &c. not only as well, but much better than it did when embodied. I conclude, therefore, that ſeeing heaven is already as much prepared for believers, as it need be, or can be; and they as much prepared from the time of their diſſolution, as ever they ſhall be; the ſcriptures alſo being ſo plain for it, and no bar in reaſon againſt it: all the forementioned opinions are but the dreams and fancies of men, who have forſaken their ſcripture guide; and this remains an unſhaken truth, that the ſpirits of the juſt go immediately to glory from the time of their ſeparation.

Prop. 8. *At the time of a gracious ſoul's ſeparation from the body it is inſtantly and perfectly freed from ſin, which till that time dwelt in it from its beginning; but henceforth ſhall do ſo no more.* Immediately upon their ſeparation from the body, they are ſpirits 'made perfect,' as my text ſtiles them; and that epithet *perfect* could never ſuit them if there were any remaining root or habit of corruption in them.

The time, yea, the ſet time is now come, to put an end to all the dolorous groans of gracious ſouls upon the account of indwelling ſin. What the angel ſaid to Joſhua, [Zech. iii. 3, 4.] the ſame doth God ſay of every upright ſoul at the time of its ſeparation, 'Take away the
'filthy garment from him, and cloath him with change

'of raiment, and ſet a fair mitre upon his head.' Thus the garment ſpotted with the fleſh are taken away with the body of fleſh, and the pure unchangeable robes of perfect holineſs cloathed upon the ſoul, in which it appears without fault before the throne of God, [Rev. xiv. 5.] There is a threefold burdenſome evil in ſin, under which all regenerate ſouls groan in this life, viz. (1.) The guilt. (2.) The filth. (3.) The inherence of it in their nature. And there is a threefold remedy or cure of theſe evils. The guilt of ſin by juſtification; the filth of ſin by ſanctification; and the inherence of it is totally eradicated by glorification. For as it entered into our perſons by the union of our ſouls and bodies; ſo it is perfectly caſt out by their diſunion or ſeparation at death. The laſt ſtroke is then given to the work of ſanctification, and the laſt is evermore the perfecting ſtroke: ſin languiſhed under imperfect ſanctification in the time of life, but it gives up the ghoſt under perfected ſanctification from and after death. Sanctification gave it its deadly wound, but glorification its final abolition. For it is with our ſins after regeneration, as it was with that beaſt mentioned Dan. vii. 12. which though it was wounded with a deadly wound, yet its life was prolonged for a ſeaſon: and this is the appointed ſeaſon for its expiration. For if at their diſſolution they are immediately received into glory (as it hath been proved they are in our ſeventh propoſition) they muſt neceſſarily be freed perfectly from ſin immediately upon their diſſolution; becauſe nothing that is unclean can enter into that pure and holy place: they muſt be as the text truly repreſents them, the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. For if ſo great holineſs and purity be required in all that draw near to God upon earth, as you read Pſal. xciii. 5. certainly thoſe who are admitted immediately to his throne, muſt be without fault, according to Rev. vii. 14—17.

When a compounded being comes to be diſſolved, each part returns to its own principle; ſo it is here. The ſpirit of man, and all the grace that is in it, came from God, and to him they return at death, and are perfect-

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ed in him, and by him: the fleſh returns to the earth whence it came, and all that body of ſin is deſtroyed with it: neither the one or other ſhall be a ſnare or clog to the ſoul any more. A Chriſtian in this world is but gold in the ore; at death the pure gold is melted out and ſeparated, and the droſs caſt away and conſumed. Hence three conſectaries offer themſelves to us.

Conſectary 1. That a believer's life and warfare end together. We lay not down our weapons of war, till we lye down in the duſt; [II. Tim. iv. 7.] 'I have fought 'a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe.' The courſe and conflict, you ſee, are finiſhed together. Though they commence from different terms, yet they always terminate together. Grace and ſin have each acted its part upon the ſtage of time, and the victory hovered doubtfully ſometimes over ſin, and ſometimes over grace; but now the war is ended, and the quarrel decided; grace keeps its ground, and ſin is finally vanquiſhed. Now, and never before, the gracious ſoul ſtands triumphing like that noble Argive,

In vacuo ſolus Seſſor Plauſorqué Theatro:

not an enemy left to renew the combat; the war is ended, and with it all the fears and ſorrows of the ſaints.

Conſectary 2. The ſeparated ſouls become impeccable, or free from all the hazard of ſin, from the time of their ſeparation; for there being no root of ſin now inherent in them, conſequently no temptation to ſin can faſten upon them: all temptations have their handles in the corruptions of our natures. Did not Satan find matter prepared within us, dry tinder fitted to his hand, he might ſtrike in temptations long enough before one of his helliſh ſparks could catch or faſten upon us. Temptations are grievous exerciſes to believers; they are darts, [Eph. vi. 16.] they are thorns, [II. Cor. xii. 7.] but the ſeparate ſoul is out of gun ſhot. It were as good diſcharge an arrow at the body of the ſun, as a temptation at a tranſlated ſoul.

Conſectary 3. Separated ſouls are more lovely companions, and their converſes more ſweet and delightful than

ever they were in this world. It was their corruption which ſpoiled their communion on earth; and it is their ſpotleſs holineſs which makes it incomparably pleaſant in heaven. The beſt and lovelieſt ſaints have ſomething in them which is diſtaſteful; even ſweet briers, and holy thiſtles, have their offenſive prickles: but when that which was ſo lovely on earth, is made perfect in heaven, and nothing of that remains in heaven, which was ſo offenſive in them on earth: O what delightful companions will they be! O bleſſed ſociety! O moſt deſireable companions! let my ſoul for ever be united to their aſſembly. I love them under their corruptions, but how ſhall my ſoul be knit to them when it ſeeth them ſhining in their perfections.

Prop. 9. *The pleaſures and delights of the ſeparate ſpirits of the juſt are incomparably greater and ſweeter than thoſe they did, or at any time could experience in their bodily ſtate.* With what a pleaſant face would death ſmile upon believers! What roſes would it raiſe in its pale cheeks, if this propoſition were but well ſettled in our hearts by faith! And if we will not be wanting to ourſelves, it may be firmly ſettled there by theſe four conſiderations, which demonſtrate it.

Conſid. 1. *Whatever pleaſures any man receives in this world, he receives it by means of his ſoul.* Even all corporeal and ſenſitive delights have no other reliſh and ſweetneſs but what the ſoul gives them; which is demonſtrable by this, that if a man be placed amidſt all the pleaſing objects and circumſtances in the world, if he were in that center where he might have the confluence of all the delights of this world; yet if the ſpirit be wounded, there is no more reliſh or ſavour in them, than in the white of an egg. What pleaſure had Spira in his liberty, eſtate, wife and children? Theſe things were indeed propoſed and urged again and again to relieve him; but inſtead of pleaſure, they became his horror: let but the mind be wounded, and all the mirth is marred; one touch from God upon the ſpirit deſtroys all the joy of this world. Nay, let but the intention of the mind be ſtrongly carried another way, and for that time, (though there be no guilt or wound upon the ſoul)

the moſt pleaſant enjoyments loſe their pleaſure. What delight, think you, would bags of gold, ſumptuous feaſts, or exquiſite melody, have afforded to Archimedes, when he was wholly intent upon his mathematical lines? By this then it is evident, that the riſe of all pleaſures is in the mind, and the moſt agreeable and pleaſing objects and enjoyments ſignify nothing without it: the mind muſt be found in itſelf, and at leiſure to attend them, or we can have no pleaſure from them.

Conſid. 2. *Of all natural pleaſures in the world, intellectual pleaſures are found to be moſt agreeable and connatural to the ſoul of man.*—The more refined and remote from ſenſe any pleaſure is, the more grateful it is to the ſoul: thoſe are certainly the ſweeteſt delights that ſpring out of the mind. A drop of intellectual pleaſure is valued by a generous and well tempered ſoul, above the whole ocean of impure joys, which come to it ſophiſticated and tanged through the muddy channels of ſenſe.

No ſenſualiſts in the world can extract ſuch pleaſure out of gold, ſilver, meat and drink, as a ſearching and contemplating mind finds in the diſcovery of truth. Heynſius, that learned library keeper of Leyden, profeſſed, that when he had ſhut up himſelf among ſo many illuſtrious ſouls, he ſeemed to ſit down there as in the very lap of eternity, and heartily pitied the rich and covetous worldings that were ſtrangers to his delights.

And Cardan tells us, that to know the ſecrets of nature, and the order of the univerſe, hath greater pleaſure and ſweetneſs in it than the thoughts of man can fathom, or any mortal hope for. Yea, ſuch beauty, ſaith Plutarch, there is in the ſtudy of mathematicks, that it were unworthy to compare ſuch baubles as riches with it. Yea, ſaith another, it were a ſweet thing to be extinguiſhed in thoſe ſtudies. Julius Scaliger was ſo delighted with poetry, that he proteſted he had rather be the author of twelve verſes in Lucan, than emperor of Germany. And, to ſay truth, there is a kind of enchanting ſweetneſs in thoſe intellectual pleaſures and feaſts of the mind; ſuch a delight as hardly ſuffers the mind to be pulled away from it.

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Theſe pleaſures have a finer edge, a higher guſt, a more agreeable ſavour to the mind than ſenſitive ones; as approaching much nearer to the nature of the ſoul, which is ſpiritual.

Conſid. 3. And as intellectual pleaſures do as far exceed all ſenſitive pleaſures as thoſe which are proper to a man do thoſe which we have in common with beaſts; ſo divine pleaſures do again much more ſurmount intellectual ones. For what compare is there betwixt thoſe joys which ſurpriſe a ſcholar in the diſcovery of the ſecrets of nature, and thoſe that overwhelm and ſwallow up the Chriſtian in the diſcovery of the glorious myſteries of redemption by Chriſt, and his own perſonal intereſt therein! To ſolve the phenomena of nature is pleaſant, but to ſolve all the difficulties about our title to Chriſt and the covenant, that is raviſhing. Archimedes's, "I have found it," was but the friſk or ſkip of a boy to that rapturous voice of the ſpouſe, 'My beloved is mine and I am his' Theſe are entertainments for angels, [I. Pet. i. 12.] a ſhort ſalvation for the ſeaſon it is felt and taſted, [I. Pet. i. 8.] after theſe delights all others are inſipid and dry. And yet one ſtep higher.

Conſid. 4. *All that divine pleaſure which ever the holieſt and devouteſt ſoul enjoyed in the body, is but a ſip or prelibation compared with thoſe full draughts it hath in the unbodied ſtate.* Whilſt it is embodied, it rejoiceth in the earneſts and pledges of joy; but when it is unbodied, it receives the full ſum, [Pſal. xvi. 11.] 'In thy preſence is fulneſs of 'joy.' This fulneſs of joy is not to be expected, becauſe not to be ſupported in this world. The joy of heaven would quickly make the hopes of nature fly. When a good man had but little more than ordinary of the joy of the Lord poured into his ſoul, he was heard to cry, Holy Lord, thy poor creature is but a clay veſſel, and can hold no more. Theſe pleaſures the ſoul hath in the body, are of the ſame kind indeed with thoſe in heaven, but are exceeding ſhort of them in divers other reſpects.

1. The ſpiritual pleaſures the ſoul hath in the body are but by reflection; but thoſe it enjoys out of the body, are

are by immediate intuition, [I. Cor. xiii. 12.] now in a glaſs, then face to face. 2. The pleaſures it hath now, though they be of a divine nature, yet they are reliſhed by the vitiated appetite of a ſick and diſtempered ſoul; the embodied ſoul is diſeaſed and ſickly, it hath many diſtempers hanging about it. Now we know the moſt pleaſant things loſe much of their pleaſure to a ſick man; the ſeparate ſoul is made perfect, thoroughly cured of all diſeaſes, reſtored to its perfect health; and conſequently divine pleaſures muſt needs have a higher guſt and reliſh in heaven than ever they had on earth. 3. The pleaſures of a gracious ſoul on earth are but rare and ſeldom, meeting with many and long interruptions; and many of them occaſioned by the body, which often calls down the ſoul to attend its neceſſities, and converſe with things of a far different nature: but from theſe and all other ungrateful and prejudicial avocations, the ſeparated ſoul is diſcharged and ſet free; ſo that its whole eternity is ſpent in the higheſt delights. 4. The higheſt pleaſures of a gracious ſoul in the body are but the pleaſures of an uncentered ſoul, which is ſtill gravitating and ſtriving forward, and conſequently can be but low and very imperfect, in compariſon with thoſe it enjoys, when it is centered and fixed in its everlaſting reſt. They differ as the ſhadow of the labourer for an hour in the day, from his reſt in his bed when his work is ended. 5. To conclude; the pleaſures it hath here, are but the pleaſures of hope and expectation, which cannot bear any proportion to thoſe of ſight and full fruition. O ſee the advantages of an unbodied ſtate!

Prop. X. *That gracious ſouls ſeparate from the body do attain to the perfection of knowledge with more eaſe than they attained any ſmall degree of knowledge whilſt they dwelt in the body.* Great are the inconveniencies and prejudices under which ſouls labour in their purſuits after knowledge in this life. Truth lies deep. And it is hard, even with much labour, pains, and ſtudy, to pump up one clear notion; for the ſoul cannot now act as it would, but is fain to act as it can, according to the limitations and permiſſions

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of the body, to which it is confined. By heedful obſervations, and painful ſearches, it is forced to deduce one thing from another, and is too often deceived and impoſed upon by ſuch tedious and manifold connections.

Truth now is forced, in compliance with our weakneſs, and diſtance from the fountain, to deſcend from heaven under veils, ſhadows, and umbrages, thereby to contract ſome kind of affinity with our fancies and exterior ſenſes firſt, that ſo it may with more advantage tranſmit itſelf to our underſtandings. It muſt come under ſome veil or other to us, whilſt we are veiled with mortality, becauſe the ſoul cannot behold it in its native luſtre, nor converſe otherwiſe with it. And hence it was that Auguſtine made his rational conjectures, why men uſed to be ſo much delighted with metaphors, becauſe they are ſo much proportioned to our ſenſes, with which our reaſon in this embodied ſtate hath contracted ſuch an intimacy and familiarity; but when the ſoul lays aſide its veil of fleſh, truth alſo puts off her veil, and ſhews the ſoul her naked, beautiful, and raviſhing face: it henceforth beholds all truth in God, the fountain of truth. There are five ways by which men attain the knowledge of God, ſay the ſchools, four of which the ſoul makes uſe of in this world; but the fifth, which is the moſt perfect, is reſerved for the ſeparate ſtate. Men diſcern God here, (1.) *In veſtigio*, by his foot-ſteps in the works of creation. God hath impreſt the marks of his wiſdom and power upon the creatures, by which impreſſions we do diſcern that God hath been there. Thus the very heathen arrive to ſome knowledge of a God, [Rom. i. 20—Acts xvii. 24, 27.] (2.) *In umbra*, by his ſhadow: if you ſee the ſhadow of a man, you gueſs at his ſtature and dimenſions thereby.—Thus Chriſt made ſome diſcovery of himſelf to the world, in the Moſaical ceremonies, and ancient types and umbrages, [Heb. x. 1.] (3.) *In ſpeculo*, in a glaſs: this gives us a much clearer repreſentation of a perſon than either his foot-ſteps or ſhadow could: this is an imperfect or darker viſion of his face by way of reflexion. And thus God is ſeen in his word and ordinances, wherein, as

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'in a glaſs we behold the glory of the Lord,' [II. Cor. iii. 18.] (4.) *In filio*, in his own Son, who is the living image and expreſs character of his Father. Thus ſometimes we ſee a child ſo lively repreſenting his father, that we may ſay, *Sic oculos, ſic ille manus, ſic ora ferebat:* Juſt ſo his father ſpake, ſo he went, and juſt ſuch a one he was. Thus we know God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, [II. Cor. iv. 6.] who is the expreſs image of his Father, [Heb. i. 3. and John xiv. 9.] This is the higheſt way of attaining the knowledge of God in this life: but then in the unbodied ſtate we ſee him. (5.) Face to face, with a direct viſion. This is to ſee him as he is: the believer is a candidate for this degree now, but cannot be inveſted with it, till diveſted of this body of fleſh. Yet the ſoul when unbodied and made perfect, attaineth not to a comprehenſive knowledge of God, for it will ſtill remain a finite being, and ſo cannot comprehend that which is infinite.—That queſtion, [Job. xi. 7.] 'Canſt thou find out the Al'mighty to perfection?' may be put to the higheſt graduate in heaven. And yet,

1. To ſee God face to face, and know him as he is, will be a knowledge of the Divine eſſence itſelf. To ſee the Divine eſſence, is to ſee God as he is, (i. e.) to ſee him ſo perfectly and fully that the underſtanding can proceed no farther in point of knowledge concerning that great queſtion, 'What is God?' Thus no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee God in this world. Even Moſes himſelf could not ſee God, [Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19, 20.] But the ſpirits of the juſt made perfect have ſatisfying apprehenſions, though no perfect comprehenſions of the Divine eſſence. 2. In this light they clearly diſcern thoſe deep myſteries which they here racked their thoughts upon, but could not penetrate in this life. There they will know what is to be known of the union of the two natures in the wonderful perſon of our Emanuel; and the manner of the ſubſiſtence of each perſon in the moſt glorious and undivided Godhead, [John xiv. 20.] The ſeveral attributes of God will then be unfolded to our underſtandings; for his eſſence and attributes are not two things, [Rev. iv. 8

—11.] O what a raviſhing ſight will this be! The myſteries of the ſcriptures, and providences of God, will be no myſteries then. Curioſity itſelf will be there ſatisfied. 3. This immediate knowledge and ſight of God face to face will be infinitely more ſweet and raviſhingly pleaſant than any or all the views we had of him here by faith ever were, or poſſibly could be. There is a joy unſpeakable in the viſions of faith, [I. Pet. i. 8.] but it comes far ſhort of the facial viſion. Who can tell the full importance of that one text, [Rev. xxii. 4.] 'The throne 'of the Lamb ſhall be in it, and they ſhall ſee his face?' O for ſuch a heaven (ſaid one) as but to look through the key-hole, and get one glimpſe of that lovely face! Earth cannot bear ſuch ſights. This light overwhelms and confounds the inadequate faculties of imperfect and embodied ſouls. But there it is *lumen comfortans*, a cheering, ſtrengthening, pleaſant light, as the light of the morning ſtar, [Rev. ii. 28.] 4. This ſight of God will be appropriative and applicative. We there ſee him as our own God and portion. Without a clear intereſt in him, the ſight of him could never be beatifical and ſatisfying. Sight without intereſt is like the light of a glow-worm, light without heat. All doubts and objections are ſolved and anſwered in the firſt ſight of this bleſſed face. 5. To conclude; this perfect and moſt comfortable knowledge is attained without labour by the ſeparate ſoul. Here every degree of knowledge was with the price of much pains.—How many weary hours and aching heads did the acquiſition of a little knowledge ſtand us in! But then it flows in upon the ſoul eaſily. It was the ſaying of a great uſurer, "I once took much pains to get a little, (meaning the firſt ſtock) but now I get much without any pains at all." O lovely ſtate of ſeparation! That body which interpoſed, clogged and clouded the willing and capable ſpirit, being drawn aſide (as a curtain) by death, the light of glory now ſhines upon it, and round about it, without any interception or let.

Prop. XI. *The ſeparated ſouls of the juſt do live in a more high and excellent way of communion with God in his temple-*

worſhip

worſhip in heaven, than ever they did in the ſweeteſt goſpel ordinances, and ſpiritual duties, in which they converſed with him here on earth. That ſaints on earth have real communion with God, and that this communion is the joy of their hearts, the life of their life, and their relief under all preſſures and troubles in this life, is a truth ſo firmly ſealed upon their hearts by experience, as well as clearly revealed in the world, that there can remain no doubt about it among thoſe that have any ſaving acquaintance with the life and power of religion.

This communion with God is of that precious value with believers, that it unſpeakably endears all thoſe duties and ordinances to them, which as means and inſtruments are uſeful to maintain it. At death, the people of God part with all thoſe ordinances and duties, they being only deſigned for, and fitted to the preſent ſtate of imperfection, [Eph. iv. 12, 13.] but not at all to their loſs, no more than it is to his that loſes the light of his candle by the riſing of the ſun. A candle, a ſtar is comfortable in the night, but uſeleſs when the ſun is up and in its meridian glory. Chriſtian, pray much, hear much, and drive as profitable a trade as thou canſt among the ordinances of God and duties of religion; for the time is at hand that you ſhall ſerve and wait on God no more this way. But yet think not your ſouls ſhall be diſcharged from all worſhip and ſervice of God when you die; no, you will find heaven to be a temple built for worſhip, and the worſhip there to be much tranſcendent to all than in which you were here employed.—The ſanctuary was a pattern of heaven in this very reſpect, [Heb. ix. 23.] And on this very account it is called Sion in my text, and the Heavenly Jeruſalem; as denoting a church-ſtate, and the ſpiritual worſhip there performed by the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. Some help we may have to underſtand the nature thereof, by comparing it with that worſhip and ſervice which we perform to God here in this ſtate of imperfection, and by conſidering the agreements and diſagreements betwixt them. In this they agree, that the worſhip above and below are

both addreſſed and directed to one and the ſame object, Father, Son, and Spirit; all centers and terminates in God. They alſo agree in the general quality, and common nature, they are both ſpiritual worſhip. But there are divers remarkable differences betwixt the one and other, as will be manifeſt in the following collation.

1. All our worſhip on earth is performed and tranſacted by faith, as the inſtrument and mean thereof, [Heb. xi. 6.] 'He that cometh to God muſt believe,' &c. In heaven faith ceaſeth, and ſight takes place of it, [I. Cor. v. 7.] There we ſee what here we only believe. There are now before us ordinances, ſcriptures, miniſters, and the aſſemblies of ſaints in the places of worſhip: but if we have communion with God, by or among theſe, we muſt ſet ourſelves to believe thoſe things we ſee not.—By realizing and applying inviſible things, we here get ſometimes, and with no ſmall pains, a taſte of heaven, and a tranſient glance of that glory. In this ſervice our faith is put hard to it, it muſt work and fight at once; reſolutely act, whilſt ſenſe and reaſon ſtand by contradicting and quarrelling with it. And if with much ado we get but one ſenſible touch of heaven upon our ſpirits, if we get a little ſpiritual warmth and melting of our affections towards God, we call that day a good day, and it is ſo indeed. But in heaven all things are carried at a higher rate; the joy of the Lord overflows us without any labour or pains of ours to procure it. We may ſay of it there, as the prophet ſpeaks of the dew and ſhowers upon the graſs, 'Which tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth 'for the ſons of men,' [Micah v. 7.]

2. No grace is or can be acted here without the clog of a contrary corruption upon its heel, [Rom. vii. 21.] 'When I would do good, evil is preſent with me.' Every beam of faith is preſently darkened by a cloud of unbelief, [Mark ix. 24.] 'Lord, I believe, help thou my 'unbelief.' We often read in the book of experience (ſaith one) what an inconſtant fickle thing the heart is in duties: now it is with us, by and by it is fled away and gone; we know not where to find it: it is conſtant only

in its inconſtancy and lubricity. There is iniquity in our moſt holy things, which needs pardon, [Exod. xxviii. 38.] Our beſt duties have enough in them to damn us, as well as our worſt ſins; but in that perfect ſtate above, grace flows purely out of the ſoul, as beams do from the ſun, or chryſtal ſtreams from the pureſt fountain. No impure or imperfect acts proceed from ſpirits made perfect.

3. Here the graces of the ſaints are never, or very rarely, acted in their higheſt and moſt intenſe degree.—When they love God moſt fervently, there is ſome coldneſs in their love. Who comes up to the height of that rule, [Matt. xxii. 37.] 'Thou ſhalt love the Lord 'thy God with all thy heart, and all thy mind, and all 'thy ſtrength?' When we meditate on God, it is not in the depth of our thoughts without ſome wanderings and extravagances; it is very hard, if not impoſſible, for the ſoul to ſtand long in its full bent to God; but in heaven it doth ſo, and will do ſo for ever, without any relaxation or remiſſion of its fervour. Chriſt among the ſaints and angels in heaven is as a mighty loadſtone caſt in among many needles, which leap to him, and fix themſelves inſeparably upon him. They all act in glory as the fire doth here, to the utmoſt of their power and ability. There is no note lower, than glory to God in the higheſt.

4. The moſt ſpiritual ſouls on earth, who live moſt with God, have, and muſt have, their daily and frequent intermiſſions. The neceſſities of the body, as well as the defectiveneſs of their graces, require and neceſſitate it to be ſo. Our hands with Moſes will hang down, and grow weary. Our affections will cool and fall, do what we can. But as the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect know no remiſſions in the degree, ſo neither any intermiſſions in the actings of their grace: 'They ſhall ſerve him day 'and night in his temple,' [Rev. vii. 15.] You that would purchaſe the continuance of your ſpiritual comforts but for a day, with all that you have in this world, will there enjoy them at full without any intermitting throughout eternity.

5. If

5. If the beſt hearts on earth be at any more than ordinarily enlarged in ſpiritual comforts, they need preſently ſome humbling providence to hide pride from their eyes. Even Paul himſelf muſt have a thorn in the fleſh, a meſſenger of Satan to buffet him. Bernard could never perform any duty with comfortable enlargement, but he ſeemed to hear his own heart whiſper thus, O well done Bernard; but in heaven the higheſt comforts are enjoyed in the deepeſt humility, and the entire glory is aſcribed to God without any unworthy defalcations. [Rev. iv. 10.] They put not the crown upon their own heads, but Chriſt's; they caſt down their crowns, and fall down at the feet of him that ſitteth upon the throne.

6. All aſſemblies for worſhip in this world are mixed; they conſiſt of regenerate and unregenerate, living and dead ſouls; this ſpoils the harmony, and allays the comfort or mutual communion. In a congregation conſiſting of a thouſand perſons, ah! how few comparatively are there that are heartily concerned in the duty! But it is not ſo above. There are ten thouſand times ten thouſand, even thouſands of thouſands before the throne, loving, adoring, praiſing, and triumphing together, and not a jarring ſtring in all their harps.

7. Here the worſhip of God is impured, mixed, and adulterated by the ſinful additions and inventions of men. This gracious ſouls groan under as a heavy burden, ſighing and praying for reformation; and knowing they can expect no more of God's preſence, than there is of his order and inſtitution in worſhip. But above all the worſhip is pure, the leaſt pin in the heavenly tabernacle is according to the perfect pattern of the divine will.

8. We have here duties of divers kinds and natures to perform. All our time is not to be ſpent in loving, praiſing, and delighting in God; but we muſt turn ourſelves alſo to ſearching, watching, and ſoul humbling work. Sometimes we are called to get up our hearts to the higheſt praiſe, and then to humble them to the duſt for ſin and judgements; one while to ſing his praiſes, and another while to ſigh even to the breaking of our loins; but the

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ſpirits of juſt men made perfect have but one kind of employment, viz. praiſing, loving, and delighting in God. There is no groaning, ſighing, ſearching, or watching work in that ſtate.

9. The moſt illuminated believers on earth have but dark and crude apprehenſions of Chriſt's interceſſion work in heaven, or of the way and manner in which it is there performed by him. We know indeed that our high prieſt is for us entered within the vail, [Heb. vi. 20.] That he appears in that moſt holy place for us, [Heb. ix. 24.] That he there repreſents his ſuffering for us to God ſtanding before him as a lamb that hath been ſlain, [Rev. v. 6.] That he offers up our prayers with his incenſe to God, [Rev. viii. 3.] but the immediate intuition of the whole performance by the perſon of Chriſt in heaven, the beholding of him in his work there, with the ſmiles and honours, the delight and ſatisfaction of the Father in his perſon and work; certainly this muſt be a far different thing, and what muſt make more deep and ſuitable impreſſions upon our hearts than ever the moſt affecting view of them by faith at this diſtance could do.

10. *In ſuch raviſhing ſights and joyful aſcriptions of glory to him that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for evermore, all the ſeparated ſpirits of the juſt are employed and wholly taken up in heaven as they come in their ſeveral times thither; and will be ſo employed in that temple-ſervice unto the end of the world, when Chriſt ſhall deliver up the kingdom to his Father, and thenceforth God ſhall be all in all.* The illuſtration and confirmation of this aſſertion we have in theſe two or three particulars.

(1.) That all the ſpirits of juſt men from the beginning of the world until Chriſt's aſcenſion into heaven, did enter into heaven as a place of reſt, as a city prepared for them of God, [Heb. xi. 16.] and did enjoy bleſſedneſs and glory there: but yet there ſeems to be an alteration even in heaven itſelf, ſince the aſcenſion of Chriſt into it, and ſuch an alteration as advanceth the glory thereof both to angels and ſaints. "Heaven itſelf," ſaith Dr. Owen, "was not what it is, before the entrance of Chriſt into

into the ſanctuary for the adminiſtration of his office. Neither the ſaints departed, nor the angels themſelves, were participant of that glory, which now they are. Neither yet doth this argue any defect in heaven, or the ſtate thereof in its primitive conſtitution; for the perfection of any ſtate hath reſpect unto that order of things which it is originally ſuited unto. Take all things in the order of the firſt creation, and with reſpect thereunto, heaven was perfect in glory from the beginning. Whatever was their reſt, refreſhment, and bleſſedneſs; whatever were their enjoyments of the preſence of God; yet was there no throne of grace erected in heaven, no high prieſt appearing before it, no Lamb as it had been ſlain, no joint aſcription of glory unto him that ſits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever; God having ordained ſome better things for us, that they without us ſhould not be made perfect. [Heb. xi. 40.] Now both the angels and ſaints in heaven do behold Chriſt in his prieſtly office within that ſanctuary, a ſight never ſeen in heaven before.

(2.) This frame of heavenly worſhip will continue as it is until the end of the world, and then another alteration will be made in the manner of his diſpenſatory kingdom: 'for then he muſt deliver up the kingdom to God; 'even the Father; and then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be 'ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that 'God may be all in all,' as the apoſtle ſpeaks, [I. Cor. xv. 24. 28.] So that as the preſent ſtate of heaven is not in all reſpects what it was before Chriſt's aſcenſion thither; ſo after the conſummation of the mediatorial kingdom, and the gathering all the elect into glory, it will not in all reſpects be what now it is. Chriſt will never ceaſe to be the immediate head of the whole glorified creation. God having gathered all the elect, both angels and men, unto a head in him, and he being the knot or center of that collective body; the whole frame of the glorified church would be diſſolved, ſhould he loſe his relation of a head to it. Yea, I doubt not but he will for ever continue to be the medium of communication betwixt God and his glorified church: God will ſtill communi-

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cate himſelf to us through Chriſt, and our adherence, love, and delight will ſtill be through Chriſt; in a word, whatever change ſhall be made, the perſon of Chriſt, and therein his human nature, ſhall ſtill continue to be the eternal object of divine glory, praiſe, and worſhip, [Rev. xxii. 4.]

But when he ſhall have gathered home all his elect to glory, he will reſign his diſpenſatory kingdom, and become ſubject, (as man, and as head of that body which he purchaſed) to his Father himſelf, 'that God may be 'all in all,' as it is I. Cor. xv. 28. (1.) All in all, that is, all the ſaints ſhall be filled and abundantly ſatisfied in and from God alone; there ſhall be no emptineſs, no want, no complaint: for as there is water enough in one ſea to fill all rivers, light enough in one ſun to illuminate all the world; ſo all ſouls ſhall be eternally filled, ſatisfied, and bleſſed in one God. Surely there is enough in God for millions of ſouls; for if there be enough in God for all the angels, [Matt. xviii. 10.] yea, enough in God for Jeſus Chriſt, [Col. i. 19.] there muſt be enough for all our ſouls; the capacity of angels is larger than ours; the capacity of Chriſt is larger than that of angels: he that fills them, can and will therefore fill us, or be all in all to us. (2.) All in all, that is, complete ſatisfaction to all the ſaints in the abſence of all other things, out of which they were wont to ſuck ſome comfort and delight in this world. He will now be inſtead of all; eminently all without them. We ſhall ſuck no more ſweetneſs out of food, ſleep, relations, ordinances, &c. there will be no more need or uſe of them, than there is of candles in the ſun-ſhine, [Rev. xxii. 5.] (3.) All in all, that is, God only ſhall be loved, praiſed, and admired by all the ſaints, they ſhall love no creature out of God, but all in God, or rather God in them all. This is that bleſſed ſtate to which all things tend, for which the angels and glorified ſouls in heaven long. Hence it is that there is joy in heaven upon the converſion of any poor ſinner on earth; becauſe thereby the body of Chriſt myſtical advanceth towards its fulneſs and completeneſs, [Luke xv. 10.] No

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ſooner is a poor ſoul ſtruck by the word to the heart, and ſent home crying, O ſick! ſick! ſick of ſin, and ſick for Chriſt! but the news of it is quickly in heaven, and is matter of great joy there, becauſe they wait as well as Chriſt for the time of conſummation. To conclude; thoſe that went firſt to heaven before Chriſt's aſcenſion, were fully at reſt in God, and bleſſed in his enjoyment, and yet upon Chriſt's aſcenſion thither their happineſs was advanced: it is a new heaven as it were to feed their eyes upon the man Chriſt Jeſus there. Thoſe that now ſtand before the throne, raviſhed with the face of Chriſt, and aſcribing glory to him for ever, are alſo in a moſt bleſſed ſtate, and are filled with the joy of the Lord. And yet two things ſtill remain to be farther done, before they are as they ſhall be for ever, viz. the reſtitution of their bodies, which yet lie in the duſt, and the delivering up of the diſpenſatory kingdom, upon the coming in of the fulneſs of all their fellow-ſaints; and after that no more alteration for ever, but they ſhall be both in ſoul and body for ever with the Lord. What tongue of man or angel can give us the complete emphaſis of that word, ever with the Lord? Or that of God's being all in all? O what hath God prepared for thoſe that love him!

Prop. XII. *It pleaſeth God at ſome times, even in this life, to give ſome men the foreſight and foretaſte of that bleſſedneſs, which holy ſeparated ſouls do now enjoy, and themſelves ſhall ſhortly enjoy with God in glory.* Specimens and earneſts of heaven are no unknown things upon earth. As the grapes of Eſhcol, ſo the joy of heaven may be taſted before we come thither; and theſe foreſights and prelibations of heaven are either, 1. Extraordinary; or, 2. Ordinary.

1. Extraordinary, for the way and manner; when the ſoul is either, (1.) wrapt from the body for a ſhort time in an ecſtaſy, when in a viſional way heavenly things are preſented to it; or, (2.) when the bodily eye is elevated and ſtrengthened above its natural vigour and ability, to behold the aſtoniſhing objects of the other world. (1.) Of the firſt ſort and rank was that famous rapture of Paul,

Paul, mentioned II. Cor. xii. 2, 3. 'I knew a man in 'Chriſt fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell, God 'knoweth) ſuch an one caught up to the third heaven,' &c. It is queſtionable indeed, whether the ſoul of the apoſtle were really ſeparated from the body whilſt he ſuffered that ecſtaſy, or whether his ſenſes were only laid as it were aſleep for that time; he himſelf could not determine the queſtion, much leſs can any other: but whether ſo or ſo, this ſeems evident, that his ſenſes were for that time utterly uſeleſs to him: if his body was not dead, it was all one as if it had been ſo, for any uſe his ſoul then made of it. In ecſtaſies all the ſenſes and powers are idle, except the underſtanding: his ſoul for that time ſeemed to be disjoined from his body, much as a flame of fire, which you ſhall ſometimes ſee to play and hover at a diſtance from the wood, and then catching the fuel again. Probably this was that trance he fell into in the temple when he was praying, mentioned in Acts xxii. 17. In this rapture his ſoul aſcended above this world, it was caught up into paradiſe, into the third heaven, the place in which Chriſt's ſoul was after his death; and there he heard thoſe ἄρρητα ῥήματα, unſpeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter: for alas! poor mortals cannot pronounce the Shibboleth of heaven; the heavenly inhabitants talk in no other dialect; but the language of heaven is not properly ſpoken by any but the inhabitants of heaven. Now Paul was not admitted into their ſociety at that time, as he was at his death, but was only a ſpectator, a ſtander-by, as the angels are in the aſſemblies of the ſaints here on earth. But O what a day was that day to his ſoul! It was as one of the days of heaven; no words could ſignify to another man what he felt, what he taſted in that hour. Such favours will not be indulged to many; he was a choſen veſſel, and appointed to extraordinary ſufferings for Chriſt, and it was neceſſary his ſupports and encouragements ſhould be anſwerable. It was no leſs extraordinary and wonderful a viſion which Iſaiah, [Iſaiah vi. 1, 2.] Ezekiel, [Ezekiel i. 1.] Daniel, [Dan. x. 8, 9,]

and John had, [Apoc. i. 17.] ſuch repreſentations of God as overwhelmed them, and made nature faint under them: and no wonder; for if the eyes of creatures be ſo weak, that they cannot directly behold ſuch a glorious creature as the ſun; how much leſs can they bear the glorious excellency and majeſty of God! (2.) And ſometimes without an ecſtaſy, repreſentations of Chriſt and the glory of heaven have been made, and the very bodily eye fortified and elevated above its natural vigour and ability to behold them. Thus it was with Stephen at his martyrdom, [Acts vii. 55, 56.] 'Who being full of the Holy 'Ghoſt, looked up ſteadfaſtly into heaven, and ſaw the 'glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding on the right hand of 'God.' That this was not a ſight of faith, but an extraordinary ſight by the bodily eye, is evident from its effect upon his outward man, it made his face ſhine as the face of an angel.

2. There are alſo beſide theſe, ordinary and more common foretaſtes of heaven, and the glory to come, with which many believers are favoured in this world. And ſuch are thoſe which come into the heart upon the ſteady and more fixed views of the world to come by faith, and the more raiſed and ſpiritual actings of grace in duty. 'Believing, we rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of 'glory, [I. Pet. i. 8.] χαρᾷ δεδοξασμένῃ, with a glorified joy, or a joy of the ſame kind and nature with the joy of glorified ſpirits, though in an inferior and allayed degree. And yet with the allowance of its allay and rebatement, it is like new wine put into old and crazy bottles, which is ready to make them fly; and would do ſo, ſhould they be of any long continuance. 'Stay me (ſaith the ſpouſe) 'with flaggons, comfort me with apples, I am ſick of 'love,' [Cant. ii. 5.] The ſickneſs was not the ſickneſs of deſire, or of grief; of that ſhe had complained before, but the ſickneſs of love. (*i. e.*) She was ready to faint under the inſupportable weight of Chriſt's manifeſted and ſealed love, not able to bear what ſhe felt, pained with the love of Chriſt; and the deſired cure ſpeaks this to be her caſe, 'Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with ap-

'ples.'

'ples.' As if ſhe had ſaid, Lord, ſupport and underprop my ſoul, for it reels, ſtaggers, and fails under the preſſure and weight of thy love. Much like the caſe of a holy man, who cried out, under the overwhelming ſenſe of the love of Chriſt ſhed abroad into his heart in prayer, Hold, Lord, hold, thy poor creature is a clay veſſel, and can hold no more. Though theſe joys bring not the ſoul into a perfect ecſtaſy, they certainly bring it as near as may be to it. Mr. Fox tells us of one Giles of Bruſſels, a godly martyr, who in priſon ſpent moſt of his time apart from the reſt in ſecret prayer; in which his ſoul was ſo ardent and intent, that he often forgot himſelf and the time; and when he was called to meat, he neither ſaw nor heard thoſe that ſtood by him, till he was lifted up by the arms; and then he would gently ſpeak to them, as one newly awakened out of a ſweet ſleep. Theſe foretaſtes of heaven may, from the manner of their conveyance, be diſtinguiſhed into, 1. Mediate; and, 2. Immediate.

1. Mediate, in and by the previous uſe and exerciſe of faith, heart examination, &c. the Spirit of God concurring with, and bleſſing of ſuch duties as theſe, helps the ſoul by them to a ſight of its intereſt in Chriſt, and the glory to come; which being gained, joy is no more under the ſoul's command. I have with good aſſurance this account of a miniſter, "who being alone in a journey, and willing to make the beſt improvement he could of that day's ſolitude, ſet himſelf to a cloſe examination of the ſtate of his ſoul, and then of the life to come, and the manner of its being and living in heaven, in the views of all thoſe things which are now pure objects of faith and hope. After a while he perceived his thoughts begin to fix, and come cloſer to theſe great and aſtoniſhing things than was uſual; and as his mind ſettled upon them, his affections began to riſe with anſwerable livelineſs and vigour. He therefore (whilſt he was yet maſter of his own thoughts) lifted up his heart to God in a ſhort ejaculation, that God would ſo order it in his providence, that he might meet with no interruption from com-

company, or any other accident in that journey, which was granted him: for in all that day's journey, he neither met, overtook, or was overtaken by any. Thus going on his way, his thoughts began to ſwell and riſe higher and higher, like the waters in Ezekiel's viſion, till at laſt they became an overflowing flood. Such was the intention of his mind, ſuch the raviſhing taſtes of heavenly joys, and ſuch the full aſſurance of his intereſt therein, he utterly loſt the ſight and ſenſe of this world, and all the concerns thereof; and for ſome hours knew no more where he was, than if he had been in a deep ſleep upon his bed. At laſt he began to perceive himſelf very faint, and almoſt choaked with blood; which running in abundance from his noſe, had diſcoloured his cloaths and his horſe, from the ſhoulder to the hoof. He found himſelf almoſt ſpent, and nature to faint under the preſſure of joy unſpeakable and unſupportable; and at laſt perceiving a ſpring of water in his way, he with ſome difficulty alighted to cleanſe and cool his face and hands, which were drenched in blood, tears, and ſweat. By that ſpring he ſat down and waſhed; earneſtly deſiring, if it were the pleaſure of God, that it might be his parting-place from this world: he ſaid, death had the moſt amiable face in his eye that ever he beheld, except the face of Jeſus Chriſt which made it ſo; and that he could not remember (though he believed he ſhould die there) that he had one thought of his dear wife or children, or any other earthly concernment. But having drank of that ſpring, his ſpirits revived, the blood ſtenched, and he mounted his horſe again; and on he went in the ſame frame of ſpirit till he had finiſhed a journey of near thirty miles, and came at night to his inn. Where being come, he greatly admired how he came thither, that his horſe, without his direction, had brought him thither, and that he fell not all that day; which paſt not without ſeveral trances of conſiderable continuance. Being alighted, the innkeeper came to him with ſome aſtoniſhment, (being acquainted with him formerly) O Sir, ſaid he, what is the matter with you? you look like a dead man.

Friend,

Friend, replied he, I was never better in my life. Shew me my chamber, cauſe my cloak to be cleanſed, burn me a little wine, and that is all I deſire of you for the preſent. Accordingly it was done, and a ſupper ſent up, which he could not touch; but requeſted of the people they would not trouble or diſturb him for that night. All this night paſſed without one wink of ſleep, though he never had a ſweeter night's reſt in all his life. Still, ſtill, the joy of the Lord overflowed him, and he ſeemed to be an inhabitant of the other world. The next morning being come, he was early on horſeback again, fearing the divertiſements in the inn might bereave him of his joy; for he ſaid it was now with him, as with a man that carries a rich treaſure about him, who ſuſpects every paſſenger to be a thief: but within a few hours he was ſenſible of the ebbing of the tide; and before night, though there was a heavenly ſerenity and ſweet peace upon his ſpirit, which continued long with him, yet the tranſports of joy were over, and the fine edge of his delight blunted. He many years after called that day one of the days of heaven, and profeſſed he underſtood more of the light of heaven by it, than by all the books he ever read, or diſcourſes he ever entertained about it." This was indeed an extraordinary foretaſte of heaven for degree, but it came in the ordinary way and method of faith and meditation.

2. There are alſo immediate illapſes of heavenly joy into the hearts of believers at ſome times; of which we may ſpeak as the prophet doth of the dew and rain, that 'it tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the ſons of men;' a ſurpriſing light and joy, like that, [Cant. vi. 12.] 'or 'ever I was aware, my ſoul made me like the chariots of 'Aminadab.' There is a witneſs of the Spirit, diſtinct from that of water and blood, [I. John v. 8.] that is, a witneſs, or ſealing, which comes not in an argumentative way, by reaſoning from either juſtification or ſanctification, but ſeems to come immediately from the Spirit. I know both ſorts of teſtimonies, how clear and ſweet ſoever they are for the preſent, are liable afterwards to be called into queſtion; but certainly, during the abode of them upon

upon the ſoul, they are no leſs than a ſhort ſalvation, a real participation of the joy of the Lord. And that which makes them ſo raviſhing and tranſporting, is, (1.) The infinite weight with which the concerns of eternity lye upon the hearts and thoughts of the people of God; nothing lyes ſo near to their ſpirits in all the world, as the matters of ſalvation do, and have ſtill done ever ſince God thoroughly awakened them in their firſt effectual conviction. It is ſaid of Luther, there was ſuch a ſtrong impreſſion of God upon his ſpirit in his firſt conviction, that there was neither heat, nor blood, nor ſenſe, nor ſpeech diſcernible in him: though it riſe to that height but in a few, yet it ſettles in a deep, ſerious, and moſt ſolemn ſenſe and ſolitude in all. This heightens the joy. (2.) The reſtleſſneſs of the ſoul, whilſt matters of ſalvation hang in a dubious ſuſpence, muſt needs proportionably overflow it with joy when God ſhall clear it. It was the ſaying of one, and is the ſenſe of many more, I have born (ſaid ſhe) ſeven children, and they have all coſt me dear; yet could I be well content to bear them all over again, for one glimpſe of the love of God to my ſoul. This heightens the joy above expreſſion.

And now, having explained the ſubſtance of the doctrine in theſe twelve propoſitions, it remains, that I farther clear what belongs to this ſubject, in the ſolution of ſeveral queries about the ſoul in its unbodied and ſeparate ſtate: and though the nature of ſome of theſe queries may ſeem too curious, yet I ſhall labour to ſpeak according to the rules of ſobriety, and contain myſelf within the line of modeſty, in what I ſhall ſpeak about them; and the firſt is this:

Query I. *Whether any notion or conception can be formed of a ſeparate ſoul; and if ſo, how we may be aſſiſted duly to form it, and conceive of it?*

Sol. 1. It muſt be acknowledged not only very difficult, but an impoſſible taſk for a ſoul immerſed in matter, and ſo unacquainted with its own nature and powers, as it is in its embodied ſtate, to gain a perfect, clear, and adequate conception of what it ſhall be in the world to come.

Expect not then a perfect image, much leſs any magnificent draught of this excellent creature: this would be the ſame thing as to go about to paint the ſun in its glory, motions, and influences, with a pencil. I ſhall think I have done enough, if I can but give you any umbrage or faint repreſentation of this ſublime and ſpiritual being, and the manner of its ſubſiſting and acting out of the body. For ſeeing it is by nature inviſible, and in moſt of its actions (whilſt it is in the ſtate of compoſition) it makes the ſame uſe of the body and natural ſpirits, that a ſcribe doth of his pen and ink, without which he cannot decipher the characters which are formed in his fancy; it muſt needs be difficult to conceive how it ſubſiſts and acts in its ſeparate ſtate.

Sol. 2. But though we acknowledge it to be a great difficulty to trace it beyond the limits of this world, though we perceive nothing to depart from the body at the inſtant of its expiration, but a puff of breath, which vaniſhes like ſmoke into the air; and though atheiſtical wits daringly pronounce an immaterial ſubſtance to be a mere jargon, a contradiction in terms, which being joined together, deſtroy one another: yet all this doth not make the notion of a ſeparate ſoul impoſſible, much leſs undermine its exiſtence in its unbodied and lonely ſtate; the ſcriptures having ſo abundantly obviated all theſe atheiſtical ſuggeſtions by ſo many plain diſcoveries of the happineſs of ſome, and miſery of others, after this life. Yea, my text anſwers us, that death is ſo far from deſtroying or annihilating, that it perfects the ſpirits of the juſt.

Sol. 3. There can be no more difficulty in conceiving of a ſeparate ſoul, than there is in conceiving of an angel. For it is certain that a ſeparated ſoul, and an angel, are the livelieſt and cleareſt repreſentations of each other, in the whole number of created beings. Some make the difference betwixt them but little more than of a ſword in the ſcabbard from one that is naked. A ſoul is but a genius in the body, and a genius (or angel) is a ſoul out of a body. An angel (ſaith another) is a complete and per-

fect ſoul, a ſoul an imperfect and incomplete angel.—The ſeparate ſoul doth not become an angel by putting off the body; they are, and ſtill will be, divers ſpecies; but in this they agree, that in their common nature they are both ſpirits, that is, immaterial ſubſtances, endued with underſtanding, will, and active power. And I know not why the one ſhould not be as intelligible as the other; or if there be any advantage, the ſoul certainly muſt have it, ſeeing our acquaintance with ſouls is much more intimate than with angels. Angels indeed have larger capacities, and have no natural inclination to be embodied as ſouls have: but their common nature, as they are ſpirits, is the ſame; and if we can conceive of one, we may alſo of the other.

Sol. 4. But the difficulty ſeems to lye in this, how the ſoul can ſubſiſt alone without a body; and how the habits of grace, which were infuſed into it in this life by ſanctification, do inhere in it, or can be reduced into act by it, when it hath no bodily organs to work by.—As to the firſt, there is no difficulty at all, if we once rightly apprehend what is meant when we call it a ſpiritual ſubſtance; that is, a being by itſelf, independent upon any other creature as to its exiſtence, as was opened before: the ſoul depends not for its life upon the body, but the body upon the ſoul. It is the ſame ſword when it is drawn, as it was when ſheathed in its ſcabbard; the ſoul is as much itſelf when ſeparated from the body, as it was when united with it; its being is independent on it, it can live and act in a body, and it can do ſo without it: for it is a diſtinct being from its body, a ſubſtantial being by itſelf. And,

Sol. 5. As for the habits of grace which accompany it to heaven, it would much facilitate our apprehenſion of it, if we but compare acquired and infuſed habits with each other. It is true, they are of different natures and originals, but the ſoul is the ſubject of them both, and their inheſion and improvement is much after the ſame manner. Take we then an acquired habit into conſideration, which is nothing elſe but a permanent quality rendering

rendering the ſubject of it prompt and ready to perform a work with eaſe: ſuppoſe that of muſic or writing, and we ſhall find theſe habits to be ſafely lodged in the ſoul, as well when the body is laid into the deepeſt ſleep, which is the image of death, as when it is awake and moſt active; for they are both artiſts when aſleep, and need learn no new rules to play or write when you awake them; which ſhews the habits to be permanently rooted in their minds. Infuſed habits of grace are as deeply rooted in the ſoul, yea, deeper than any acquired habit can be; for when knowledge and tongues ſhall be done away, love abideth, [I. Cor. xiii. 8.] viz. after death, when the body is aſleep in the grave.

Sol. 6. Add hereto, that theſe habits of grace are inſeparably rooted or lodged in a ſubject, which is by nature a ſpirit, that is to ſay, an intelligent, active being, able to uſe its faculties of * underſtanding, will, and affections, and conſequently in their uſe to reduce theſe habits of grace inherent in them into act without the help of the body; for to ſuppoſe otherwiſe were to diſ-ſpirit it, and deſtroy the very nature of it. Moreover, let this ſpirit, thus furniſhed with gracious habits, be now conſidered in ſeparation from the body, in which ſtate it enjoyeth and rejoiceth in a double privilege it never had before, viz. perfection both of itſelf and of its graces, and the neareſt acceſs to God it is capable of, [II. Cor. 5, 6.] 'Abſent from the body, and preſent with the 'Lord.' It hath now no body to clog or cloud it, nor can it complain of diſtance from God as it did in this world. O at what rate muſt we conceive the love and delight of a ſoul under theſe great advantages, to caſt out their very ſpirits, as I may ſay, in their glorious activities and exerciſes! Well then, here you find a ſpirit naturally endued with underſtanding, will, and affections; in theſe

* The underſtanding and will are the primary faculties of the ſoul, and are therefore called *inorganical*, becauſe not affixed to any member of the body, as the ſenſitive appetite and loco-motive powers are to their proper organs: the ſoul, therefore, hath the free uſe and exerciſe of them in its ſeparate ſtate.

faculties and affections the habits of grace are permanently rooted, which therefore accompany it in its aſcenſion to glory: an ability to uſe and exerciſe theſe faculties and graces, and that in a more excellent degree and manner than it did or could in this world, the ſubject and habits inherent being now both made perfect; the clog of fleſh knocked off, and all diſtance from God removed by its coming home to him, even as near as the capacity of the ſoul can admit. Conceive ſuch a ſpirit ſo qualified, now ranked in its proper order among innumerable other holy and bleſſed ſpirits which ſurround the throne of God, beholding his face with infinite delectation, and acting all its powers and graces to the higheſt in the worſhipping, praiſing, loving, and admiring him that ſitteth on the throne, and the Lamb for evermore; and then you have a true, though imperfect idea or notion of the ſpirit of a juſt man made perfect. I will not here make uſe of the other glaſs to repreſent a damned ſoul, ſeparate for a time from its body, and for ever from the Lord; that will be ſhewn you in its proper place.

Query II. *Whether there be any difference in the ſeparation of gracious ſouls from their bodies; and if ſo, in what particulars doth the difference appear?*

Sol. For the clear ſtating and ſatisfying of this queſtion, I will lay down ſome things negatively, and ſome things poſitively, about it. On the negative part I deſire two things may be noted:

1. That there is no difference betwixt the ſeparation of one gracious ſoul and another in point of ſafety. Every regenerate ſoul is fully ſecured in and by Jeſus Chriſt from the danger of periſhing, and is out of hazard of the wrath to come. This muſt needs be ſo, becauſe all that are in Chriſt are equally juſtified by the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, without difference, to them all, [Rom. iii. 22.] 'Even the righteouſneſs of 'God, which is by faith of Jeſus Chriſt unto all, and 'upon all them that believe, for there is no difference;' by virtue whereof they are all equally ſecured from wrath to come, one as well as another: as all that ſailed with Paul,

Paul, ſo all that die in Chriſt, come ſafe to the ſhore of glory, and not one of them is loſt. The ſting of death ſmites none that are in Chriſt.

2. There is no difference betwixt the departing ſouls of juſt men, in reſpect of the ſupporting preſence of God with them in that their hour of diſtreſs; that promiſe belongs to them all, [Pſal. xci. 15.] 'I will be 'with him in trouble;' and ſo doth that Heb. xiii. 5. 'I 'will never leave thee, nor forſake thee. Their God is certainly with them all, to order the circumſtances of their death, and all the occurrences of that day, to his glory and their good. Supports I have, (ſaid a good man in ſuch an hour) though ſuavities I want; and ſo they have alſo, who meet with the hardeſt tug at death. But notwithſtanding their equality in theſe privileges, there is a great difference betwixt the departing ſouls of juſt men; and this difference is manifeſt both in the, 1. External; and, 2. Internal circumſtances of their death.

1. In the external circumſtances of their death, all have not one and the ſame paſſage to heaven in all reſpects; for, (1.) Some go thither by the ordinary road of a natural death from their beds, and the arms of lamenting friends, to the arms and boſom of Jeſus Chriſt; but others ſwim through the Red Sea to Canaan, from a ſcaffold to the throne, from a gibbet or ſtake to their Father's houſe, from inſulting enemies to their triumphant brethren, the palm-bearing multitude. This is a rough, but honourable way to glory. (2.) Some lie long under the hand of death, before it diſpatch them; it approaches them by ſlow and lingering paces, they feel every ſtep of death diſtinctly as it comes on towards them; but others are favoured with a quick diſpatch, a ſhort paſſage from hence to glory. Hezekiah feared a pining ſickneſs, [Iſa. xxxviii. 10, 12.] what he feared, many feel. O how many days, yea, weeks and months, have many gracious ſouls dwelt upon the brink of the pit, crying, How long, Lord, how long! (3.) The pains and throes of death are more acute and ſharp to ſome of God's people than to others:

death

death is bitter in the moſt mild and gentle form of it. Two ſuch dear and intimate friends as the ſoul and body are, cannot part without ſome tears, groans, or ſighs; and thoſe more deep and emphatical than the groans and ſighs of the living uſe to be; but yet (comparatively ſpeaking) the death of one may be ſtiled ſweet and eaſy to another's. Latimer and Ridley found it ſo, though burnt in the ſame flame. In this reſpect all things come alike to all, and the ſame difference is found in the worſt as well as in the beſt men; ſome like ſheep are laid in the grave, [Pſal. xlix. 14.] others die in the bitterneſs of their ſoul, [Job xxi. 25.] and by this no man knows either love or hatred.

2. There are beſides theſe, ſome remarkable internal differences in the diſſolution of good men: the ſum whereof is in this.

1ſt. That ſome gracious ſouls have a very hard, ſtrait, difficult entrance into heaven; juſt as it is with ſhips that ſail with a very bare wind, all their heart, care, and pains will but juſt weather ſome head land or cape; they ſteer faſt by ſome dangerous rock or ſand, and with a thouſand fears and dangers win their port at laſt. Saved they are, but yet (to uſe the apoſtle's phraſe) ſcarcely ſaved, or ſaved as by fire. And this difficulty ariſes to them from one or all theſe cauſes; (1.) It ordinarily ariſeth from the weakneſs of their faith, which is in many ſouls without either the light of evidence, or ſtrength of reliance; neither able to diſſolve their doubts, nor ſteadily repoſe their hearts: and thus they die much at the rate they lived, poor, doubting, and cloudy, though gracious ſouls. They can neither ſpeak much of the comfort of paſt experiences, nor of the preſent foretaſtes of heaven. (2.) The violent aſſaults and batteries of temptations make the paſſage exceeding difficult to ſome. O the ſharp conflicts and dreadful combats many poor ſouls endure upon a death bed! O the charges of hypocriſy fortified by neglects of duty, falls into ſin after conviction and humiliation, &c. all which the ſoul is apt to yield to, and admit the dreadful concluſion. Theſe are the laſt, and therefore oft

times the moſt violent conflicts. The malice of Satan will ſend them halting to heaven, if he cannot bar them out of it. (3.) To conclude: the hiding of God's face puts terror into the face of death, and makes a dying day a dark and gloomy day. All darkneſs diſpoſes to fear, but none like inward darkneſs. They muſt, like a ſhip in diſtreſs, venture in the harbour in the dark, though they ſee not their land marks.

2dly. But others have the privilege of an eaſy death, a comfortable and ſweet paſſage into glory, through the broad gate of aſſurance, [II. Pet. i. 11.] even an abundant entrance in the everlaſting kingdom. What a difference doth God make, not only betwixt thoſe that have grace, and thoſe that have none, but betwixt gracious ſouls themſelves in this matter! The things which uſually make an eaſy paſſage to heaven are, (1.) A pardon cleared, [Iſa. xxxiii. 24.] The ſenſe of pardon ſwallows up the ſenſe of pain. (2.) A heart weaned from this world, [Heb. xi. 9, 13, 16.] A heart looſed from the world is a foot out of the ſnare. Mortified limbs are cut off from the body with little pain. (3.) Fervent love to Chriſt, and longings to be with him, [Phil. i. 23.] He that loves Chriſt fervently, muſt needs loath abſence from Chriſt proportionably. (4.) Purity and peace of conſcience make a death bed ſoft and eaſy. The ſtrains and wounds of conſcience in the time of life are ſo many thorns in our bed or pillow in the time of death, [I. John iii. 21.] but integrity gives boldneſs. (5.) The work of obedience faithfully finiſhed, or a ſteady courſe of holineſs throughout our life, is that which uſually yields much peace and joy in death, [Acts xx. 24.] (6.) But above all, the preſence of the Comforter with us in that cloudy and dark day, turns it into one of the days of heaven, [Pet. iv. 14.] And thus you ſee, though all dying Chriſtians be equally ſafe, and all ſupported and carried through by the power of God; yet their farewels to the body are not alike cheerful. There are many external and internal circumſtantial differences in the death of good men, as well

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as a ſubſtantial and eſſential difference betwixt all their deaths, and the death of a wicked man.

Query III. *Whether any ſouls have notices and forewarnings given them by ſigns or predictions in an extraordinary way of their approaching ſeparation?* The terms of this queſtion need a little explanation. Let us therefore briefly conſider what is meant by ſigns, what by predictions, and what by extraordinary ſigns and predictions.

A ſign is that which repreſents ſomething elſe to us than that which is ſeen or heard. And a ſign of death is that which gives notice to our minds that our departure is at hand.—A prediction is a forewarning of a perſon more plainly and expreſſly of any thing which is afterwards to fall out, or come to paſs: and a prediction of death is an expreſs notice or meſſage informing us of our own or of another's death, to the end the mind may be actually diſpoſed to an expectation thereof.

Of ſigns, ſome are ordinary and natural, ſome extraordinary and ſupernatural, or at leaſt preternatural.—There are natural ſymptoms and prognoſtics of death, which are common to moſt dying perſons, and by which phyſicians inform themſelves and others of the ſtate of the ſick. Theſe are out of this queſtion, we have nothing to do with them here; but I am inquiring after extraordinary ſigns and predictions by words or things forewarning us immediately or by others of our approaching death. The queſtion is whether ſuch intimations of death be at any time truly given unto men; or whether we are to take them for fabulous reports and ſuperſtitious fancies.—For the negative, the following grounds are laid:

1. The ſufficient ordinary proviſion God hath made in this caſe, renders all ſuch extraordinary notices and intimations of our death needleſs; and be ſure the moſt wiſe God doth nothing in vain. We have three ſtanding, ordinary, and ſufficient means to premoniſh us of our departure hence, viz. the ſcriptures, reaſon, and daily examples of morality before our eyes. The ſcriptures tell us our life is but a vapour which appeareth for a little while, and then vaniſheth away, [James iv. 14.] That

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our days are but as a hand breath, and that every man in his beſt eſtate is vanity, [Pſal. xxxix. 5.] Reaſon tells us, ſo feeble a tie as our breath is can never ſecure our lives long. The living know that they muſt die, [Eccleſ. ix. 5.] The radical moiſture, which is daily conſuming by the flame of life, muſt needs be ſpent ere long. And all the graves we ſee opened ſo frequently, are ſufficient warnings that we ourſelves muſt ſhortly follow. Therefore as there was no need of manna, when bread might be had in an ordinary way; ſo neither is there need of extraordinary ſigns, when God hath abundantly furniſhed us with ſtanding and ordinary means for this purpoſe.

2. And as the ſcriptures render ſuch ſigns needleſs, ſo they ſeem to be directly againſt them. Chriſt commands us to watch, becauſe we know not in what hour the Lord cometh. Yea even Iſaac himſelf, an extraordinary perſon, and endued with a ſpirit of propheſy, whereby he foretold the condition of his ſon after him, yet it is ſaid, Gen. xxvii. 2. that he knew not the day of his death. And it is not reaſonable to think that common perſons ſhould know that, which extraordinary and prophetic perſons knew not.

3. All mankind belong either to God or the devil.—To ſuch as belong to God, ſuch extraordinary warnings are needleſs, for they have a watchful principle within them, which continually prompts them to mind their change; and beſides, death cannot endanger thoſe that are in Chriſt, how ſuddenly or unexpectedly ſoever it ſhould befall them. And for wicked men, it cannot be thought God ſhould favour and privilege them in this matter above his own children; and as for Satan, he knows not the time of their death himſelf: and if he did it would thwart his deſign and intereſt to diſcover it to them; [Luke xi. 21.] So upon the whole, it ſhould ſeem ſuch ſigns and predictions are of no uſe, and the relation and reports of them fabulous. But though theſe reaſons make the common and daily uſe of ſuch ſigns and

predictions needleſs, yet they deſtroy not the credibility of them in all caſes, and at all times. For,

1. There are recorded inſtances in ſcripture of premonitions of the death of perſons. Thus the death of Abijah was foretold to his mother by the prophet, and the preciſe hour thereof, which fell out anſwerably, [I. Kings xiv. 6, 12.] And thus the death of the king of Aſſyria was foretold exactly, both as to kind and place, [Iſa. xxxvii. 7, 37, 38.]

2. Theſe predictions ſerve to other ends and uſes, ſometimes, than the preparation of the perſons warned, even to diſplay the foreknowledge, power, and juſtice of God, in marking out his enemies for ruin. And thus 'the Lord 'is known by the judgements that he executeth,' [Pſal. ix. 16.] Thus Mr. Knox predicted the very place and manner of the death of the Laird of Grange. "You have ſometime ſeen the courage and conſtancy of the Laird of Grange in the cauſe of God, and now that unhappy man is caſting himſelf away. I pray you go to him from me (ſaid Mr. Knox) and tell him, that unleſs he forſakes that wicked courſe he is in, the rock wherein he confideth, ſhall not defend him, nor the carnal wiſdom of that man (meaning the young Leſhington) whom he counteth after God, ſhall help him; but he ſhall be ſhamefully pulled out of that neſt, and his carcaſs hung before the ſun." And even ſo it fell out the following year, when the caſtle was taken, and his body hanged out before the ſun. Thus God exactly fulfilled the prediction of his death. The ſame Mr. Knox in the year 1566, being in the pulpit at Edinburgh, upon the Lord's day, a paper was given up to him among many others, wherein theſe words were ſcoffingly written concerning the earl of Murray, who was ſlain the day before, "Take up the man whom ye accounted another God." At the end of the ſermon Mr. Knox bewailed the loſs of the church and ſtate by the death of that virtuous man; and then added, "There is one in this company that makes this horrible murder the ſubject of his mirth, for which all good men ſhould be ſorry; but I tell him he ſhall die where there ſhall be none

to lament him." The man that wrote the paper was one Thomas Metellan, a young gentleman, who ſhortly after in his travels died in Italy, having none to aſſiſt or lament him.

3. And others have had premonitions and ſigns of their own deaths, which accordingly fell out. And theſe premonitions have been given them, ſometimes by ſtrong irreſiſtible impreſſions upon their minds, ſometimes in dreams, and ſometimes by unuſual elevations of their ſpirits in duties of communion with God.

(1.) Some have had ſtrong and irreſiſtible impreſſions of their approaching change made upon their minds. So had Sir Anthony Wingfield who was ſlain at Breſt, Anno 1594. At his undertaking that expedition, he was ſtrongly perſuaded it would be his death; and therefore ſo ſettled and diſpoſed of his eſtate, as one that never reckoned to return again. And the day before he died, he took order for the payment of his debts, as one that ſtrongly preſaged the time was now at hand, which accordingly fell out the next day. Much of the ſame nature was that of the late earl of Marlborough, who fell in the Holland war. He not only preſaged his own fall in that encounter, (which was exactly anſwered in the event) but left behind him that memorable and excellent letter, which evidenced to all the world, what deep fixed apprehenſions of eternity it had left upon his ſpirit. Many examples of this nature might be produced of ſuch as have in their perfect health foretold their own death; and others who have dropt ſuch paſſages as were afterwards better underſtood by their ſorrowful friends, than when they firſt dropt from their lips.

(2.) Others have been premoniſhed of their death by dreams, ſometimes their own, and ſometimes others. The learned and judicious Amyraldus gives us this well atteſted relation of Lewis of Bourbon, that a little before his journey from Dreux, he dreamed that he had fought three ſucceſsful battles, wherein his three great enemies were ſlain, but that he himſelf was mortally wounded; and that after they were laid one upon another, he alſo was laid upon

the dead bodies. The event was remarkable; for the mareſchal of St. Andrée was killed at Dreux, the duke of Guiſe at Orleans, the conſtable of Montmorancy at St. Dennis. And this was the triumvirate which had ſworn the ruin of thoſe of the reformed religion, and the deſtruction of that prince. At laſt he himſelf was ſlain at Baſack, as if there had been a continuation of deaths and funerals.—Suetonius in the life of Julius Cæſar tells us, that the night before he was ſlain, he had divers premonitions thereof, for that night all the doors and windows of his chamber flew open; his wife alſo dreamed that Cæſar was ſlain, and that ſhe had him in her arms. The next day he was ſlain in Pompey's Court, having received 23 wounds in his body.—Pamelius in the life of Cyprian tells us for a moſt certain and well atteſted truth, that upon his firſt entrance into Carubis (the place of his baniſhment) it was revealed to him in a dream or viſion, that upon that very day twelvemonth he ſhould be conſummate; which accordingly fell out; for a little before the time prefixed, there came ſuddenly two apparitors to bring him before the new Procunſul Galeius, by whom he was condemned, as having been a ſtandard bearer of his ſect, and an enemy of the gods. Whereupon he was condemned to be beheaded, a multitude of Chriſtians following him, crying, Let us die together with him.—And as remarkable is that recorded by the learned and ingenious Dr. Sterne, of Mr. Uſher of Ireland, a man, ſaith he, of great integrity, dear to others by his merits, and my kinſman in blood; who upon the 8th Day of July, 1657, went from this to a better world. About four of the clock the day before he died, a matron, who died a little before, and whilſt living, was dear to Mr. Uſher, appeared to him in his ſleep, and invited him to ſup with her the next night; he at firſt denied her, but ſhe more vehemently preſſing her requeſt on him, at laſt he conſented, and that very night he died.

I have alſo the fulleſt aſſurance that can be of the truth of the following narrative: A perſon yet living was greatly concerned about the welfare of his dear father and mother,

who

who were both ſhut up in London in the time of the great contagion in 1665. Many letters he ſent to them, and many hearty prayers to heaven for them. But about a fortnight before they were infected, he fell about break of day into this dream, That he was in a great inn which was full of company, and being very deſirous to find a private room, where he might ſeek God for his parents life, he went from room to room, but found company in them all; at laſt caſting his eye into a little chamber which was empty, he went into it, locked the door, kneeled down by the outſide of the bed, fixing his eyes upon the plaiſtered wall within ſide of the bed; and whilſt he was vehemently begging of God the life of his friends, there appeared upon the plaiſter of the wall before him the ſun and the moon, ſhining in their full ſtrength. The ſight at firſt amazed and diſcompoſed him ſo far, that he could not continue his prayer, but kept his eye fixed upon the body of the ſun; at laſt a ſmall line or ring of black, no bigger than that of a text pen, circled the ſun, which increaſing ſenſibly, eclipſed in a little time the whole body of it, and turned into a blackiſh colour; which done, the figure of the ſun was immediately changed in a perfect death's head, and after a little while vaniſhed quite away. The moon ſtill continued ſhining as before; but whilſt he intently beheld it, it alſo darkened in like manner, and turned alſo in another death's head, and vaniſhed. This made ſo great an impreſſion upon the beholder's mind, that he immediately awakened in confuſion and perplexity of thoughts about his dream; and awakening his wife, related the particulars to her with much emotion and concernment; but how to apply it he could not preſently tell, only he was ſatisfied that the dream was of an extraordinary nature. At laſt Joſeph's dream came to his thoughts with the like emblems, and their interpretation, which fully ſatisfied him that God had warned and prepared him thereby for a ſudden parting with his dear relations, which anſwerably fell out in the ſame order, his father dying that day fortnight following, and his mother juſt a month afterwards. I know there is much vanity in dreams, and

yet

yet I am fully ſatisfied ſome are weighty, ſignificant, and declarative of the purpoſes of God.

(3.) Laſtly, An unuſual and extraordinary elevation of the ſoul to God, and enlargement in communion with him, hath been a ſignifying forerunner of the death of ſome good men. For as the body hath its lightening before death, and is more vegete and briſk a little before its diſſolution; ſo it is ſometimes with the ſoul alſo. I have known ſome perſons to arrive on a ſudden to ſuch heights of love to God, and vehement longings to be diſſolved, that they might be with Chriſt, that I could not but look upon it, as Chriſt did upon the box of ointment, as done againſt their death. And ſo indeed it hath proved in the event.—Thus it was with that renowned ſaint, Mr. Brewen of Stapleford; as he excelled others in the holineſs of his life, ſo he much excelled himſelf towards his death, his motions towards heaven being then moſt vigorous and quick. The day before his laſt ſickneſs, he had ſuch extraordinary enlargements of heart in his cloſet duty, that he ſeemed to forget all the concernments of his body, and this lower world. And when his wife told him, Sir, I fear you have done yourſelf hurt with riſing ſo early; he anſwered, "If you had ſeen ſuch glorious things as I ſaw this morning in private prayer with God, you would not have ſaid ſo; for they were ſo wonderful and unſpeakable, that whether I was in the body or out of the body, with Paul, I cannot tell."—And ſo it was with learned and holy Mr. Rivet, who ſeemed as a man in heaven, juſt before he went thither. And ſo it hath been with thouſands beſide theſe. I confeſs it is not the lot of every gracious ſoul, (as was ſhewed in the laſt queſtion) nor doth it make any difference as to the ſafety of the ſoul, whatever it makes as to comfort. Let all therefore labour to make ſure their union with Chriſt, and live in the daily exerciſes of grace in the duties of religion; and then, though God ſhould give them no ſuch extraordinary warnings one way or another, they ſhall never be ſurpriſed by death to their loſs, let it come never ſo unexpectedly upon them.

Queſt.

Queſt. It may be alſo queried, whether Satan by his inſtruments may not foretel the death of ſome men? How elſe did the witch of Endor foretel the death of Saul? And the ſoothſayers the death of Cæſar upon the Idəs, (i. e.) the fifteenth day of March, which was the fatal day to him.—*Sol.* Foreknowledge of things to come, which appear not in their next cauſes, is certainly the Lord's prerogative; [Iſa. xli. 23.] Whatever therefore Satan doth in this matter, muſt be done either by conjecture or commiſſion. As to the caſe of Saul, it is not to be queſtioned but that Satan knowing the kingdom was made to David by promiſe, and that the Lord was departed from Saul, and ſeeing how near the armies were to a battle, might ſtrongly conjecture and conclude, and accordingly tell him, 'To-'morrow thou ſhalt be with me,' [I. Sam. xxviii. 19.] And ſo for the death of Cæſar, the devil knew the conſpiracy was ſtrong againſt him, and the plot laid for that day; and ſo it was both eaſy for him to reveal it to the ſoothſayers, and his intereſt to do it, thereby to bring that curſed art into reputation. As for other ſigns and forewarnings of death, by the unuſual reſort of doleful creatures, as owls and ravens, vulgarly accounted ominous; wall-watches, upon this account called death-watches; and the eating of wearing apparel by rats; I look upon them generally as ſuperſtitious fancies, not worthy to be regarded among Chriſtians. God may, but I know not what ground we have to believe that he doth, commiſſion ſuch creatures to bring us the meſſage of death from him. To conclude; therefore let no man expect or depend upon ſuch extraordinary premonitions and warnings of his change, or neglect his daily work and duty of preparation for it. We have warnings in the word, in the examples of mortality frequently before us, in all the diſeaſes and decays we often feel in our own bodies; and by the ſigns of the times, which threaten death and deſolation. Be ye therefore always ready, for ye know not in what watch of the night your Lord cometh.

Queſt. IV. *Whether ſeparated ſouls have any knowledge of, or commerce and intercourſe with men in this life; and if not, what*

what is to be thought of the apparitions of the dead? 1. By ſeparated ſouls underſtand the departed ſouls both of the godly and ungodly indifferently, and not as it is reſtrained to one ſort only in the text; for of both it is pretended there are frequent apparitions after death. 2. By the knowledge ſuch ſouls are ſuppoſed to have after death both of perſons and things in this lower world, we underſtand not a general knowledge, which one ſort of them have of the ſtate and condition of the church militant on earth: for this we think cannot be denied to the ſpirits of the juſt made perfect, ſeeing they are ſtill fellow members with us of the ſame myſtical body of Chriſt, and do behold our high prieſt appearing before God, and offering up our prayers for us; and long for the conſummation of the body of Chriſt, as well as cry for vengeance againſt the perſecutors thereof, [Rev. vi, 10.] nor do I think thoſe words, [Iſa. lxiii. 16.] repugnant hereunto, 'Abra-'ham is ignorant of us, and Iſrael acknowledgeth us not:' for I look upon the import of thoſe words only as a humble acknowledgement of their defection, which rendered them unworthy that their foreſathers ſhould own or acknowledge them any more for their children: and not as implying their utter ignorance, or total oblivion of the church's ſtate on earth. But I here underſtand ſuch a particular knowledge of our perſonal ſtates and conditions, as they once had when they dwelt amongſt us in the body; and this ſeems to be denied them by theſe following ſcriptures alledged againſt it, [Job xiv. 21. Eccleſ. ix. 5, 6. John xix. 25.] 3. By commerce and intercourſe underſtand not their interceſſion with God for us, which the Papiſts affirm; but their concernments about our natural or civil intereſts in this world, ſo as to be uſeful to our perſons, by warning us of death or dangers, or to our eſtates, by diſquieting ſuch as wrong us, in not fulfilling the wills and teſtaments they once made, or by giving us notice by words or ſigns of the death of our friends who died at a diſtance from us, or come to ſome violent and untimely end.

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The ſenſe of the words being thus determined, and the queſtion ſo ſtated, I will for the reſolution of it give you, 1. The ſtrength of what I find offered for the affirmative. 2. The general conceſſions, or what may be granted. 3. My own judgement about it, with the grounds thereof.

1. Some there are, even among the learned and judicious, who are for the affirmative part of the queſtion, and do with much confidence aſſert, that departed ſouls both know our particular concerns in this world, and intermeddle with them; confirming their aſſertion both by reaſons to convince us that it may be ſo, and variety of inſtances that it is ſo. I will produce both the one and the other, and give them a due conſideration and cenſure.—The ſubſtance of what is pleaded for the affirmative I find thus collected and improved by Dr. Sterne, a learned phyſician in Ireland, in his book, entituled, A Diſſertation concerning Death, where he offers us theſe four arguments to convince, that it is poſſible for departed ſouls thus to appear, and perform ſuch offices for their friends on earth.

1. Angels, by command from God, are uſeful and helpful to men; they are the ſaints' guardians, and it is probable that each Chriſtian hath his peculiar angel: whence it will follow, that ſeparated ſouls do mingle themſelves with human affairs, and that becauſe they are angels, at leaſt equal unto angels, [Luke xx. 36.] Beſides, they being ſpirits that were once embodied, muſt needs be more fit for this employment, than thoſe who never had any tie at all to a body; unleſs we can imagine them to have loſt their remembrance of all that ever they did and ſuffered in the body; as alſo that they put off and buried all their affections to us with their bodies, which is hard to think. Even as Chriſt our High-Prieſt is qualified for that office above all others in heaven, becauſe he once dwelt and ſuffered in a body like ours here upon earth; ſo ſeparated ſouls are qualified above all other ſpirits who are unrelated to bodies of fleſh.

2. The church, triumphant and militant, are but one body; and by how much better the triumphant are than

the militant, by ſo much the more propenſe they are to ſuccour and help the other that ſtand in need of it. This being the caſe, we cannot imagine but they are inclined to perform all good offices for us; for elſe they ſhould do leſs for us now they are in a ſtate of higher perfection in heaven, than they did, or were willing to do, in their imperfect ſtate on earth.

3. A will or teſtament (as Ulpian defines it) is the juſt ſentence or declaration of our minds concerning that which we would have done after our deceaſe. Theſe teſtaments have always, and among all nations, been religiouſly obſerved, as the apoſtle witneſſeth, [Gal. iii. 15.] The reaſons of this ſo religious obſervance are a preſumption, that thoſe who made them when alive, continue in the ſame mind and will after death; that they take care for the fulfilling of them, and revenge the non-performance upon the unjuſt executors; for otherwiſe there can be no reaſon why ſo great a ſtreſs ſhould be laid upon the will of the dead, if they care not whether their wills be performed or no. Why ſhould we be ſo ſolicitous and ſtudious about it, and pay ſo great reverence to it, but on this account?

4. The ſcriptures forbid conſultation with the dead, [Deut. xviii. 10, 11.] This prohibition ſuppoſeth ſome did conſult them, and received anſwers from them, which muſt needs only imply ſome commerce betwixt the living, and the ſouls that are departed. — And conſidering he had before forbidden their conſultation with the devil, it appears that here we muſt needs underſtand the very ſouls of the dead, and not the devil perſonating them only. Theſe are the arguments of this learned author for the affirmative, which he cloſes with two neceſſary cautions; firſt, That this lays no foundation for religious worſhip or invocation of departed ſouls; thoſe that are helpful to us, are not therefore to be worſhipped. Secondly, That we muſt acknowledge ourſelves to be under much darkneſs as to the way and manner of the converſe of ſpirits with us.

The moſt acute and learned Dr. More I find of the ſame opinion. He affirms that departed ſouls are capa-

ble of a vital union with an airy vehicle, (or body) in which they can eaſily move from place to place, and appear to the living, and act in their own affairs; as in detecting murders, rebuking injurious executors, viſiting and counſelling their wives and children, forewarning them of ſuch and ſuch courſes, &c. To which we may add the profeſſion of the ſpirits thus appearing, of being the ſouls of ſuch a one; as alſo the ſimilitude of the perſon; and all this ado is in things very juſt and ſerious, unfit for a devil, with that care and kindneſs to promote; and as unfit for a good genius, it being below ſo noble a nature to tell a lie. All theſe things put together, and rightly weighed, the violence of prejudice not pulling down the balance, I dare appeal (ſaith he) to any, whether it will not be certainly carried for the preſent cauſe, and whether any indifferent judge ought not to conclude, if theſe ſtories, which are ſo frequent every where, and in all ages, concerning the ghoſts of men appearing, be but true, that it is true alſo that they are their ghoſts, &c. Theſe are the ſtrongeſt arguments I meet with for the affirmative, that the matter is poſſible it may be ſo; and then adding the credible inſtances that it is ſo, the matter ſeems to be determined.

To this purpoſe Dr. Sterne alledges ſeveral inſtances out of ſcripture, as that appearance of Samuel unto Saul, and the conference betwixt them; as alſo the letters that were ſent to Jehoram by Elijah, after that Elijah was tranſlated to heaven, as appears by comparing II. Chron. xxi. 12. with II. Kings iii. 11.; in which it appears that in Jehoſaphat's time, who preceded this Jehoram, Elijah was dead, and yet in Jehoram's time, who ſucceeded him, he is ſaid to receive letters from Elijah. The appearance and conference alſo betwixt Chriſt, and Moſes, and Elias, upon the mount, in the preſence of ſome of the diſciples, confirms it, [Matt. xvii. 3.] Theſe are the principal ſcripture inſtances; others are almoſt innumerable. From among that vaſt heap I will ſelect ſome few that are moſt material, and of cleareſt credit.

It is a thing (ſaith Dr. Sterne) both known and frequent, that the inhabitants of the Scottiſh Iſles, when their friends are dying, come to them, and requeſt them that upon ſuch or ſuch a day after their death, and in ſuch a place, they would meet them; which the dead accordingly do at the time and place agreed upon, and have ſometimes diſcourſe with them.

Infinite examples of murders (ſaith Dr. More) have been diſcovered by dreams, the ſouls of the perſons murdered ſeeming to appear to ſome or other aſleep, and to make their complaints to them; giving us a notable example out of Baronius, of Marſilius Ficinus; who having made a ſolemn vow with Michael Mercatus, (after they had been pretty warmly diſputing of the immortality of the ſoul out of the principles of their maſter Plato) that whether of them two die firſt, he ſhould appear to his friend, and give him certain information of that truth. It was Ficinus's fate to die firſt, and that not long after this mutual reſolution. He was mindful of his promiſe after he had left the body; for Mercatus being very intent at his ſtudies, betimes on a morning, heard a horſe riding by with all ſpeed, and obſerved that he ſtopped at his window, and therewith heard the voice of his friend Ficinus, crying out aloud, "O Michael, Michael, thoſe things are true, they are true!" Whereupon he ſuddenly opened his window, and eſpying Marſilius upon a white ſteed, called after him, but he vaniſhed out of his ſight. He ſent therefore preſently to Florence, to know how Marſilius did, and underſtood that he died about that hour he called at his window.

Much to the ſame purpoſe is that ſo famous and well-atteſted ſtory of the apparition of Major George Sydenham to Captain William Dyke, both of Somerſetſhire, atteſted by the worthy and learned Dr. Thomas Dyke, a near kinſman of the Captain's, and by Mr. Douch, to whom both the Major and the Captain were intimately known. The ſum is this: the Major and Captain had many diſputes about the being of a God, and the immortality of the ſoul, in which points they could never be reſolved, though

they

they much ſought for and deſired it; and therefore it was at laſt fully agreed betwixt them, that he that died firſt ſhould, the third night after his funeral, come betwixt the hours of twelve and one to the little houſe in the garden ajoining to Major Sydenham's houſe at Dulverton in Somerſetſhire. The Major died firſt, and the Captain happened to lie that very night which was appointed in the ſame chamber and bed with Dr. Dyke; he acquainted the doctor with the appointment, and his reſolution to attend the place and hour that night, for which purpoſe he had got the key of that garden. The doctor could not divert his purpoſe, but when the hour came he was upon the place, where he waited two hours and a half, neither ſeeing nor hearing any thing more than uſual. About ſix weeks after the Captain and the Doctor went to Eaton, and lay both in the ſame inn, but not in the ſame chamber, as before at Dulverton. The morning before they went thence, the Captain ſtaid longer than was uſual in his chamber, and at length came into the Doctor's, but in a viſage and form much differing from himſelf, with his hair and eyes ſtarting, and his whole body ſhaking and trembling: whereat the Doctor wondering, demanded what was the matter. The Captain replies, I have ſeen my Major; at which the Doctor ſeeming to ſmile, the Captain ſaid, If ever I ſaw him in my life, I ſaw him but now; adding, this morning, after it was light, ſome one came to my bed-ſide, and ſuddenly drawing back the curtains, calls Cap, Cap, Cap, (which was the term of familiarity that the Major uſed to call the Captain by) to whom I replied, What, my Major? To which he returns, I could not come at the time appointed, but I am now come to tell you, "That there is a God, and a very juſt and terrible one; and if you do not turn over a new leaf, you will find it ſo!" This ſtuck cloſe to him, little meat would go down with him at dinner, though a handſome treat was provided; theſe words were ſounding in his ears frequently during the remainder of his life.—He was never ſhy or ſcrupulous to relate it to any that

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aſked him concerning it, nor ever mentioned it but with horror and trepidation. They were both men of a briſk humour and jolly converſation, of very quick and keen parts, having been both Univerſity and Inns-of-Court gentlemen. The apparition of the ghoſt of Sir George Villers, father of the Duke of Buckingham, giving three ſolemn warnings, by three ſeveral apparitions to his ſervant Mr. Parker, is a known and credible ſtory. But I will wade no farther into particulars, they are almoſt innumerable; let theſe ſuffice for a taſte.

II. In the next place, therefore, I will lay down ſome Conceſſions about this matter; and the firſt Conceſſion is this—*That the ſeparated ſouls or ſpirits of men are capable of performing and executing any miniſtry or ſervice for God, (if he ſhould commiſſionate them ſo to do) as well as angels are, whom we know he frequently employs about the perſons and affairs of his people on earth.* Though they become not angels by their ſeparation, as Maximus Tyrius calls them, but remain ſpecifically diſtinct from them, yet are they ſpiritual ſubſtances as the angels are: this their nature capacitates them either to live and act out of the body, or to aſſume (as angels do) an aerial body for the time of their miniſtry: nor do I know any thing in ſcripture or philoſophy repugnant hereunto.

2. *It cannot be doubted but upon ſome ſpecial and extraordinary reaſons and occaſions, ſome departed ſouls have returned to, and appeared in this world by order and commiſſion from God.* This is too manifeſt to be doubted by any that underſtands and believes the inſtances recorded in ſcripture. Moſes and Elias, long after their departure, appeared to, and talked with Chriſt upon the holy mount, in the preſence of ſome of his apoſtles, [Matt. xvii. 3.] nor is there any reaſon to queſtion the reality of their apparition, or to think it to be no more than a phantaſm, or imaginary reſemblance of theſe perſons, but very Moſes and Elias themſelves: for they came to be witneſſes to Chriſt's prophetical office; and it was not fit ſo great a point ſhould be atteſted by imaginary witneſſes, or that they ſhould be called Moſes and Elias, if they were not the very ſame perſons.

perſons. It is therefore moſt likely, they both appeared in their own bodies: for Moſes' body we know was hidden by the Lord, and Elias's body immediately tranſlated with his ſoul to heaven, when therefore the Lord would ſend them upon this ſolemn errand, the ſoul of Moſes probably re-aſſumed that body which was never found by man, and Elias was already embodied, and fit immediately for this expedition. In like manner we read, [Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.] that at the reſurrection of our Lord, 'many bo-'dies of the ſaints aroſe, and appeared unto many:'—Theſe were no phantaſms, but the very ſouls of the departed ſaints returned (having re-aſſumed their own bodies) unto this world, not only to confirm the truth of Chriſt's reſurrection, and adorn that great day, but as a ſpecimen or handſel of the reſurrection of all the ſaints in the virtue of his reſurrection at the great day. Nor will I deny, but upon ſome leſſer (though never without weighty and ſolemn) occaſions and reaſons, God may ſometimes ſend the ſouls of the dead back again into this world, as in the caſes before recited, to evidence againſt the atheiſm of men, &c. Auguſtine relates a memorable example which fell out at Millain, where a certain citizen being dead, there came a creditor to whom he had been indebted, and unjuſtly demanded the money of his ſon. The ſon knew the debt was ſatisfied by his father; but having no acquittance to ſhew, his father appeared to him in his ſleep, and ſhewed him where the acquittance lay: whether it were the very ſoul of his father, or rather an angel, as Auguſtine thinks, is not certain, though the one as well as the other be poſſible. But though rarely, and upon ſome weighty and ſolemn occaſions, ſome ſouls have returned and appeared, yet I judge this is not frequently done upon ſlight and ordinary errands; and therefore, to give you my own thoughts, I judge,

3. *That thoſe apparitions which ſeem to be, and are generally reputed and taken for the ſouls of the dead, are not indeed ſo, but other ſpirits putting on the ſhapes and reſemblances of the dead, and (for the moſt part) tricks of the devil to delude or diſquiet men.* In this I think the learned Dr. Brown delivered

vered his judgement more ſolidly and orthodoxly, than in ſome other points, when he ſaith, "I believe that the whole frame of a beaſt doth periſh, and is left in the ſtate after death as it was before it was materialled into life;—that the ſouls of men know neither contrary, nor corruption;—that they ſubſiſt beyond the body, and continue by the privilege of their proper nature, and without a miracle;—that the ſouls of the faithful, as they leave earth, take poſſeſſion of heaven;—that thoſe apparitions and ghoſts of departed perſons are not the wandering ſouls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and ſuggeſting us unto miſchief, blood, and villany. And with this opinion I concur as to the ordinary and common apparitions of the dead; and my reaſons are:

(1.) Becauſe the ſcriptures every where deſcribe the ſtate of departed ſouls as a fixed ſtate, either in heaven or in hell; and aſſign the good or evil done in this world by ſpirits, not to the departed ſpirits of men, but to angels or devils; and it is our duty to regulate our conceits by ſcripture, and not according to the vain philoſophy of the heathens, or the ſuperſtitious traditions and opinions of men. As for the ſouls of the godly, they are at reſt with Chriſt, [Rev. xiv. 13.—Iſa. lvii. 2.] and as fixed as pillars in the houſe of God, [Rev. iii. 12.] And for the wicked, their ſpirits are confined and ſecured in hell as in a priſon, [I. Pet. iii. 19.] there is a fixed gulph betwixt them and the living, [Luke xvi. 27—31.] What good offices are to be done by ſpirits for us, the angels are God's commiſſion-officers to do them, [Heb. i. 14.] 'They are all 'miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who 'ſhall be heirs of ſalvation.' Theſe are the ſpirits ſent forth to walk to and fro through the earth, [Zech. i. 10.] Their miniſtry was emblematically repreſented in Jacob's viſion, where they were ſeen aſcending and deſcending as upon a ladder, betwixt heaven and earth, [Gen. xxviii. 12.] Yea, their very name angel is a name of office, ſignifying a meſſenger, or one ſent. And for the miſchief done by ſpirits in this world, the ſcriptures aſcribe that to the devils; thoſe unquiet ſpirits have their walks in

this

this world, they compaſs the whole earth, and walk up and down it, [Job i. 7. and I. Pet. v. 8.] they can aſſume any ſhape; yea, I doubt not but he can act their bodies when dead, as well as he did their ſouls and bodies when alive. How great his power is this way, appears in what is ſo often done by him in the bodies of witches. They are not ordinarily therefore the ſpirits of men, but other ſpirits that appear to us.

(2.) If God ſhould ordinarily permit the ſpirits of men inhabiting the other world, a liberty ſo frequently to viſit this, what a gap would it open for Satan to beguile and deceive the living! What might he not by this means impoſe upon weak and credulous mortals! There hath been a great deal of ſuperſtition and idolatry already introduced under this pretence: he hath often perſonated ſaints departed, and pretended himſelf to be the ghoſt of ſome venerable perſon, whoſe love to the ſouls of the people, and care for their ſalvation, drew him from heaven to reveal ſome ſpecial ſecret to them. Swarms of errors, and ſuperſtitious and idolatrous opinions and practices, are this way conveyed by the tricks and artifices of Satan among the papiſts, which I will not blot my paper withal; only I deſire it may be conſidered, that if this were a thing ſo frequently permitted by God, as is pretended, upon what dangerous terms had he left his church in this world, ſeeing he hath left no certain marks by which we may diſtinguiſh one ſpirit from another, or a true meſſenger from heaven from a counterfeit and pretended one. But God hath tied us to the ſure and ſtanding rule of his word; forbidding us to give heed to any other voice or ſpirit leading us another way, [Iſa. viii. 19.—II. Theſ. ii. 1, 2.—Gal. i. 8.] It was therefore a diſcreet reply which one of the antients made, when in a prayer a viſion of Chriſt appeared to him, and told him, "Thy prayers are heard, for thou art worthy:" The good man immediately clapt his hands upon his eyes, "I will not ſee Chriſt here; it is enough for me that I ſhall behold him in heaven." To conclude: my opinion upon the whole is this, that although it cannot be denied, but in ſome

grand and extraordinary caſes, as at the transfiguration and reſurrection of Chriſt, God did, and perhaps ſometimes, though rarely, may order or permit departed ſouls to return into this world; yet for the moſt part I judge thoſe apparitions are not the ſouls of the dead, but other ſpirits, and for the moſt part evil ones. Of this judgement was St. Auguſtine, who when he had at full related the ſtory above of the father's ghoſt directing his ſon to the acquittance, yet will not allow it to be the very ſoul of his father, but an angel; where he farther adds, "If (ſaith he) the ſouls of the dead might be preſent in our affairs, they would not forſake us in this ſort; eſpecially my mother Monica, who in her life could never be without me, ſurely ſhe would not thus leave me, being dead.

Object. 1. *But it was pleaded before, that we allow the apparitions of angels; and departed ſouls, if they be not angels, at leaſt are equal unto angels, and in reſpect of their late relation to us, are more propenſe to help us, than ſpirits of another ſort can be ſuppoſed to be.* *Sol.* It ſeems too bold an impoſing upon ſovereign Wiſdom to tell him what meſſengers are fitteſt for him to ſend and employ in his ſervice: who hath taught him or been his counſellor?

Object. 2. *But theſe offices ſeem to pertain properly to them as they are not only fellow members, but the moſt excellent members of the myſtical body, to whom it belongs to aſſiſt the meaner and weaker.* *Sol.* If there be any force of reaſon in this plea, it carries it rather for the angels than for departed ſouls; for angels are gathered under the ſame common head with the ſaints; the text tells us, 'We are 'come to an innumerable company of angels:' they and the ſaints are fellow-citizens, and we know they are a more noble order of ſpirits; and as for their love to the elect, it is exceeding great, as great to be ſure as the departed ſouls of our deareſt relations can be. For after death they ſuſtain no more civil relations to us; all that they do ſuſtain is as fellow-members of the ſame body, or fellow-citizens, which angels alſo are as well as they.

Object.

Object. 3. *But* (ſaith the Doctor) *the reaſon why all nations pay ſo great honour and religious care to the wills of the dead, is a ſuppoſition that they ſtill continue in the ſame mind after death, and will avenge the falſifications of truſts upon injurious executors, elſe no reaſon can be given why ſo great a ſtreſs ſhould be laid upon the will of the dead.*

Sol. This is a cheap and unwary expreſſion: can no reaſon be given for the religious obſervance of the teſtaments of the dead but this ſuppoſition? I deny it; for though they that made them be dead, yet God, who is witneſs to all ſuch acts and truſts, liveth; and though they cannot avenge the frauds and injuſtice of men, he both can and will do it, [I. Theſ. iv. 6.] which I think is a weightier ground and reaſon to enforce duty upon men than the fear of ghoſts. Beſides, this is a caſe wherein all the living are concerned; all that die muſt commit a truſt to them that ſurvive; and if frauds ſhould be committed with impunity, who could ſafely repoſe confidence in another? That which is of general concernment, and becomes every man's intereſt, infers a general obligation upon all. As for the letters of Elijah, it is vanity to think they came poſt from heaven; no, no; they were doubtleſs left behind him out of due care to the government, and produced in that fit occaſion.

Object. 4. *But what need of a law to prohibit necromancy or conſultation with the dead, if it were not practicable? Sol.* I do not think the wicked art there prohibited enabled them to recal departed ſouls; but it was converſing with the devil, who perſonated the dead, and therein a kind of homage was paid him to the diſhonour of God; or he might poſſibly raiſe the bodies of wicked men, and appear in them: but I think the ſpirits of the dead return not, except as was before limited.

Object. 5. *But the matters they diſcover are found to be true, and the cauſes in which they concern themſelves are juſt; real murders are detected by them, and real frauds and injuries corrected and rectified; but the devil being himſelf a liar and deceiver, would never do it: it is not his intereſt to diſcover or diſcourage ſuch things. Sol.* Though it be not his intereſt

merely to diſcover it, yet it is certainly his intereſt to precipitate wicked men, and haſten their ruin by the hand of juſtice; and he will ſpeak the truth, and ſeem to own a righteous cauſe to bring about his great deſign of ruining the ſouls and bodies of men. I will ſhut up with three cautions: 1. Strain not conſcience to enrich poſterity; be true to the truſt committed to you by the dead, or by the living, remembering, that though they be dead, and cannot avenge the wrong, yet the Lord lives, and will ſurely do it in a ſeverer manner than they could, ſhould they appear in the moſt terrible and frightful forms to you: beſides, your own conſciences will haunt you worſe than a ghoſt. Be juſt and true, therefore, in all your promiſes and truſts, for God is the avenger. 2. Finiſh your work for eternity before you die; 'For as the 'cloud is conſumed, and vaniſhed away, ſo he that 'goeth down to the grave ſhall come up no more; he 'ſhall return no more to his houſe, neither ſhall his 'place know him any more, [Job vii. 9, 10.] Your ſouls will be fixed in eternity ſoon after they are looſed from your bodies: when death comes, away you muſt go, willing or unwilling, ready or unready; but no returning hither, how willing ſoever. 3. Keep yourſelves from that heatheniſh and accurſed practice of conſulting the devil about your abſent or dead relations; a practice too common in ſea-port towns, and of deep and heinous guilt before God, [Iſa viii. 19.] 'And when they ſhall 'ſay unto you, ſeek unto them that have familiar ſpirits, 'and unto wizards that peep and mutter; ſhould not a 'people ſeek unto their God, for the living to the dead?' You need not call the devil twice, that ſubtle and officious ſpirit draws the living into his net by ſuch a bait as this: you meet your mortal enemy under the diſguiſe of your dead friend.

Query V. *Whether the ſeparated ſouls of the juſt in heaven have any converſe, or communication with each other? and how that can be, ſeeing all the organs and inſtruments of ſpeech and hearing are laid aſide with their bodies?* For it ſeems impoſſible that ſeparated or unbodied ſpirits ſhould converſe together, ſeeing the inſtruments by which the thoughts are communicated

ſeated from one another, are periſhed in the grave. Suppoſe the tongue of a man to be cut out, his eyes and hands periſhed, or made uſeleſs while the ſoul remains in the body: it may enjoy its own thoughts within itſelf, but it is impoſſible to ſignify them to another by words or ſigns. Or ſuppoſe a man in a deep ſleep (wherein the ſenſes are only bound for a little time) he may indeed exerciſe his own fancy in a pleaſant dream, but another cannot underſtand how it is entertained; but in death the ſenſes are not bound, but extinguiſhed. Beſide, we muſt not think the felicity of the departed holy ſouls to conſiſt in mutual converſes one with another, but in their ineffable viſions of God, and communion with him. To him who is omniſcient, and underſtands their moſt inward thoughts, they can freely communicate them, and receive his, as well as pour forth their own love; but to do it to their fellow-creatures, who ſee not as God doth, ſeems impoſſible. Indeed it was never doubted, but after the reſurrection they ſhall both know and talk with one another in a more excellent and perfect manner than now they do; but till that time, the reaſons above ſeem to perſuade us, that all the converſes above are only betwixt God and them, which indeed is enough to make them happy: and indeed, if this ability be allowed to ſeparated ſouls, it ſeems to render the reſurrection of their bodies needleſs; for they are well enough without them. But certainly the ſpirits of juſt men are not mutes: ſuch an auguſt aſſembly of holy and excellent ſpirits do not live together in their Father's houſe without mutual converſe and fellowſhip with each other, as well as with God. That acute and judicious divine, Mr. Joſeph Symonds, in the epiſtle to his book, intitled, Sight and Faith, expreſſeth himſelf about this matter thus: "I often think (ſaith he) of the communion of the ſpirits of men, which certainly is more than many are acquainted with: though we act one upon another in our preſent ſtate by the help of ſenſe; yet we are wrought and deſigned to a more excellent way. Angels and the ſpirits of men made perfect converſe and trade in a mutual communication, not without ſenſe, but without ſuch ſenſe as ours. This, as eternal

nal life, begins here, and is found in ſome degrees in this mortal ſtate, though not in ſo viſible appearances as to lye open to much obſervation. Angels good and bad do act upon our ſpirits, and our ſpirits hold converſe with them, and with the Father of ſpirits, which may be diſcerned in ſecret parleys and diſcourſes betwixt them and us; much of this appears in David's pſalms: and there paſſeth not only an inward ſpeech, but there are inviſible approaches, entertainments, and touches, which Saul found when bound in the ſpirit, and under the working of God, which wrought in him mightily, [Col. i. 29.] It is alſo moſt certain that our ſouls are not mute, and ſhut out from all mutual traffick with each other, except what they have by the mediation of ſenſes.

"Inſtances are found, that (as they ſay of two needles touched with the loadſtone) the ſpirit of one at a diſtance hath found itſelf affected with the motion and ſtate of another. And this we are all ſenſible of, that there is a deſire in us to communion of ſpirits; and that becauſe the way moſt ready and convenient to our bodily ſtate is by ſenſe, we are carried with much inclination to maintain intercourſe of our minds and ſpirits by ſenſe; but as being made to a better way, our ſouls are not ſatisfied with this preſent way, as being both painful and ſhort. We cannot give an exact copy of our apprehenſions, deſires, deſigns, delights, and other affections by theſe two great mediators of communion, the eye, and the ear: but becauſe we are in ſo great a meaſure confined to this courſe, our ſouls, as it were, ſtand in theſe two gates, to ſend and receive mutual embaſſies each from other. Which way, as it is ſhort in itſelf, ſo it is much ſhortened by diſtances, diſaffections, impotencies, and diſparities. I cannot imagine that men in the ſtate of imperfection ſhould have ſo many ways to communicate their minds, as by ſpeaking, writing, &c. yea, that the very birds and beaſts are by nature enabled to ſignify to each other their inclinations; and that the ſpirits of juſt men (which are the beſt of all human ſpirits, and that when made perfect too, which is the beſt and higheſt ſtate attainable

tainable by them) ſhould have none, but live at a greater diſadvantage in this reſpect than they did, or the very birds and beaſts in this world do. The ſum of my thoughts about this matter I will lay down in the following ſections:

Sect. 1. The ſtate of heaven (as was at large opened in our eleventh propoſition) being an aſſociation of angels and bleſſed ſouls for the glorifying and praiſing of God in his temple there, and his worſhip being carried on by joint aſcriptions of glory to God, [Rev. vii. 9—12.] They muſt of neceſſity, for the orderly carrying on of his heavenly worſhip, underſtand each other's mind, and communicate their thoughts; for without this it is not imaginable how a joint or common ſervice, in which thouſands of thouſands are employed, can be decorouſly and orderly managed, except we conceive of them as ſo many machines or wind inſtruments that are managed by an intelligent agent, though themſelves be ſenſeleſs, and merely paſſive: certainly their conſent is a different thing from that of the keys of a harpſicord, or ſtrings of a lute; they are intelligent beings, who underſtand their own and each other's mind: and beſides, without this ability, that ſociety in heaven would be leſs comfortable, as to mutual refreſhing fellowſhip, than the ſociety of the ſaints is here. So that it is not to be doubted, but theſe noble and excellent ſpirits can, and do communicate their thoughts to each other, and that in a moſt excellent way.

Sect. 2. But yet we cannot imagine theſe communications betwixt them to be by words formed by ſuch inſtruments and organs of ſpeech as we now uſe, for they are bodileſs beings: words and articulate ſounds are fitted to the uſe and ſervice of embodied ſpirits. It is therefore probable, that they convey and communicate their minds to one another, as the bleſſed angels do, not with tongues of fleſh, (though we read of the tongue of light, I. Cor. xiii. 1.) but in a way ſomewhat analogous to this, though much more noble and excellent. For look, as the ſcripture ſtiles the moſt excellent food, angels food, ſo the moſt excellent ſpeech, or moſt eloquent tongues,

angels tongues. The pureſt rhetoric that ever flowed from the lips of the moſt charming orator, is but babbling, to the language of angels, or of ſpirits made perfect. When Saul was wrapt in the third heaven, where he was admitted to the ſight and bleſſed aſſembly, it is ſaid he heard ἀῤῥητα ῥηματα, words unſpeakable, ſpiritual language, ſuch as his tongue neither could or ought to utter, ſuch as none but heavenly inhabitants can ſpeak: and Dan. viii. 13. 'I heard,' ſaith Daniel 'one ſaint ſpeaking, 'and another ſaint ſaid unto that certain ſaint that ſpake, '&c.' he heard the inquiries of the angels, deſiring to know the myſtery from the mouth of Chriſt. A language they have, but not like ours.

Sect. 3. The communication of angels and ſouls in heaven is therefore conceived to be an ability in thoſe bleſſed ſpirits ſilently, and without ſound to inſtil and inſinuate their minds and thoughts to each other by a mere act of their wills: juſt as we now ſpeak to God, or ourſelves in our hearts, when our lips do not move, or the leaſt outward ſign appear.

There are two ways by which the ſouls of men ſpeak, one outwardly, by the inſtruments of ſpeech, or ſenſible ſigns; the other inwardly, without ſound or ſign. This inward ſilent ſpeech is nothing elſe but an act of the will, calling forth ſuch things into our actual thoughts and meditations, which before lay hid and quiet in the memory, or habit of knowledge. Theſe thoughts, or actual revolvings of things in the mind, are in ſcripture called דבר עם לבבך a word or ſpeech in the heart, [Deut. xv. 9.] Take heed to thyſelf, that there be not a wicked word in thy heart, we tranſlate it a wicked thought; thoughts are the words and voice of the ſoul: and ſo Matt. ix. 3. they ſpake within themſelves, i. e. their ſouls ſpake, though their lips moved not. All meditation is an inward ſpeech in the ſoul, and therefore הוש indifferently ſignifies both to ſpeak and to meditate. The objects which we reſolve in our thoughts, are ſo many companions with whom we converſe: and thus a man (like Heinſius) may be in the midſt of abundance of excellent company when he is alone.

alone. And this is ſilent talk to ourſelves, without any ſound or noiſe.

Object. But you will ſay, though the ſpirit of a man can thus talk to or with itſelf, yet this can ſignify nothing to others: for what man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of man that is in him? [I. Cor. ii. 11.] 'It is not therefore enough to open this internal 'door of the will, for except we open alſo the external 'door of the lips, no man can know our minds, or be 'admitted into the ſecrets of our ſouls: ſhould we never 'ſo earneſtly deſire that another ſhould know our minds, 'except we pleaſe alſo to diſcover it by word or ſign, he 'cannot know it; and therefore an act of the will is not 'ſufficient, without ſome external ſignification ſuperadded. 'And theſe ſouls being bodileſs, can give no ſuch outward 'ſignification.'—*Sol.* It is indeed needful among men in this world to unlock another door beſide that of their will to communicate the ſecrets of their hearts to others; but angels and the ſpirits of men having no bodies, conſequently have but one door, to wit, that of the will, to open; and the opening thereof (which is done by one act or deſire in a moment) is enough to diſcover ſo much of their minds as they would have diſcovered to another ſpirit. If they keep the door of their will ſhut, no angel or ſpirit can know what is in their thoughts without a revelation from God; and if they but will or deſire others ſhould know, no word can ſo fully manifeſt one man's mind to another, as ſuch an act of the will doth manifeſt theirs. And this, ſaith learned Zanchy, is the tongue of angels, and the ſame way the ſpirits of men have to make known their minds in their unbodied ſtate. It is but the turning the key of the will, and their thoughts or deſires are preſently ſeen and known by others, to whom they will diſcover them, as a man's face is ſeen in a glaſs, when he pleaſeth to turn his face to it. Would one ſpirit make known his mind to another; it is but to will he ſhould know it, and it is immediately known.

Sect. 4. This internal way of ſpeaking and communication among ſpirits is much more noble, perfect, and

excellent, than that which is in uſe among us by words and ſigns; and that in two reſpects, viz. 1. Of clearneſs. 2. Of diſpatch and ſpeed. 1. Spiritual language is more clearly expreſſive of the mind and thoughts, than words, writing, or any other external ſigns can be. The greateſt maſters of language do often cloud their meaning for want of words fit and full enough to expreſs it; truth ſuffers by the poverty and ambiguity of words: many controverſies are but mere ſtrifes about words and ſcuffling in the dark, by the miſtakes of each other's ſenſe and meaning: few have the ability of putting their own meaning into apt, proper, and full expreſſions; and if they can, yet others to whom they ſpeak, want an anſwerable ability of underſtanding, and clearneſs of apprehenſion to receive it. If we could diſcern the true and natural ſenſe of things, juſt as it is in the mind of the ſpeaker or writer, how many controverſies would be thereby quickly ended? But ſpirits unbodied ſo convey their ſenſe and mind to one another, that there can be no miſtakes, no darkening of counſel by words without knowledge; but one receives it juſt as it lyes in the other's mind. 2. Spiritual language is more eaſy, and of quicker diſpatch. Some men have voluble tongues, and are much more ready and preſential than others, their tongues are as the pen of a ready ſcribe; and others, no leſs ready with their hands, which keep pace with, yea, outrun the tongue of the ſpeaker, as Martial notes; yet all this is but bungling work to the ready diſpatch of ſpirits; one act of the will opens the window to diſcern the mind of another clearly; ſo that the converſe of ſpirits muſt indeed be more excellent in both reſpects, than any we are accuſtomed to, or acquainted with in this world; I will ſhut up this queſtion with one corollary.

Long to be aſſociated with the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. You that are going to join that bleſſed aſſemby, will even in this reſpect gain an invaluable advantage. It is true, there is much of comfort in the preſent converſes of embodied and imperfect ſaints: it is ſweet to faſt and pray, to ſigh and groan together; it is ſweeter to rejoice

joice and praiſe our God together. It is ſweet to talk of heaven with our faces thitherward: but alas! what is this to the converſes that are among the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect! With what melting hearts have we ſometimes ſet under the doctrine of the goſpel! how have our ears been chained with delight to the preacher's lips, whilſt he hath been diſcourſing of thoſe raviſhing ſubjects, Chriſt and heaven! but alas! how dry and dull a thing is the beſt of this to the language of heaven! Three things debaſe and ſpoil the communications of the ſaints on earth, viz. the darkneſs, dulneſs, and frothineſs thereof. 1. The darkneſs and ignorance of our underſtandings. How crude, weak, and indigeſted are our higheſt and pureſt notions of ſpiritual things! we ſpeak of them but as children, [I. Cor. xiii. 11.] For alas, the vail is yet upon our faces! The body of ſin, and the body of fleſh, caſt a very dark ſhadow upon the world to come; but the apprenenſions of ſeparated ſouls are moſt bright and clear. This darkneſs begets miſtakes, miſtakes beget ſo many quarrels and janglings, that our fellowſhip on earth loſeth at once both its profit and pleaſure. 2. There is much dulneſs and deadneſs accompanying the communion of ſaints on earth; abundance of precious time is waſted among us in unprofitable ſilence; and when we engage in diſcourſes of heaven, that diſcourſe is often little better than ſilence; our words freeze betwixt our lips, and we ſpeak not with that concernedneſs and warmth of ſpirit which ſuits with ſuch ſubjects. It is not ſo among our brethren above; their affections are at the higheſt pitch giving glory to God in the higheſt. 3. To conclude; in the diſcourſes of the beſt men on earth there is too much froth and vanity. Many words, like water, run away at the waſte ſpout; but there God is the center in which all terminates. O therefore let us long to be among the unbodied people! This world will never ſuit us with companions in all things agreeable to the deſires of our hearts. The beſt company are got together in the upper room; an hour there is better than an age below. Whatever fellowſhip ſaints leave on earth, they ſhall be ſure to find better in heaven

Query VI. *Whether the ſeparated ſouls of the juſt in heaven do incline to a re-union with their own bodies? And how that re-union is at laſt effected?* That theſe bleſſed ſouls have no ſuch inclination or deſire theſe reaſons ſeem to perſuade.

1. That their bodies, whilſt they lived in them, were no better than ſo many priſons. Many were the prejudices, damages, and miſeries they ſuſtained and ſuffered in them. It kept them at an uncomfortable diſtance from the Lord, [II. Cor. v. 6.] their bemoaning cries ſpake their uneaſy ſtate. How often hath every gracious ſoul thus lamented itſelf! Wo is me, that I dwell in Meſheck. It incloſed their ſouls within its mud walls, which intercepted the light and joy of God's face. Death therefore did a moſt friendly office when he ſet it at liberty, and brought it forth into its own pure and pleaſant light and liberty.* Theſe bleſſed ſpirits now rejoice as priſoners do in their recovered liberty: and can it be ſuppoſed, after all theſe ſufferings, groans, and ſighs to be diſſolved, they can be willing to be embodied again? Surely there is as little reaſon for ſouls at liberty, to deſire to be embodied, as there is for a bird got out of the ſnare or cage, to fly back again to its place of confinement and reſtraint. Yea, when we conſider how loth ſome holy ſouls, when under the excruciating pains of ſickneſs, and as yet in the ſight of this alluring world, have been to hear of a return to it by the recovery of their health; we cannot think, but being quite out of the ſight of this, and the fruition of the other world, the thoughts of the body muſt needs be more loathſome to them than ever. We read, that when a good man in time of his ſickneſs was told by his friends, that ſome hopeful ſigns of his recovery began now to ap-

* The body obſtructs and obſcures the mind in its conceptions, and pollutes it by its union with the fleſh; hence the light of the mind is more defective as it paſſeth, in a manner through a glaſs of fleſh: doubtleſs, when by the power of death the ſoul is, as it were, ſqueezed out of the body to which it was ſo cloſely united and in this manner purified, then it breaks from its confinement to aſſume an unmixed light, ſuitable to its nature.

Tertullian on the ſoul.

pear;

pear; he anſwered, And muſt I then return to this body? I was as a ſheep driven out of the ſtorm almoſt to the fold; and then driven back into the ſtorm again: or as a weary traveller near his home, who muſt go back again to fetch ſomething he had neglected: or as an apprentice whoſe time was almoſt out, and then muſt begin a new term. Of ſome others it hath been alſo noted, that the greateſt infirmities they diſcover upon their death bed, have been their too paſſionate deſires to be diſſolved, and their unſubmiſſiveneſs of God's will in their longer ſtay in the body. Now the body of the ſaints being ſo cheerfully forſaken, and that only for a foretaſte of heaven by faith; how can it be thought they ſhould find any inclination to a re-union when they are ſo abundantly ſatisfied with the joys of his face in heaven? certainly the body hath been no ſuch pleaſent habitation to the ſoul, that it ſhould caſt an eye or thought that way, when it is once delivered out of it. If it were burdenſome here, a thought of it would be loathſome there.

2. We have ſhewed before, that the ſeparate ſoul wants not the help of the body, but lives and acts at a more free and comfortable rate than ever before. It is true, it is not now delighted with meat and drink, with ſmells and ſounds, as it was wont to be; but then it muſt be conſidered, that it is happineſs and perfection not to need them. It is now become equal to the angels in the way and manner of its living: and that it enjoyed by the miniſtry of the body, it eminently and more perectly enjoys without it. What perfection can the ſoul receive from matter? What can a lump of fleſh add to a ſpirit? And if it can add nothing to it, there is no reaſon why it ſhould hanker after it, and incline to a re-union with it. It addeth nothing of happineſs to it, but much of trouble, and therefore becomes juſtly undeſirable to.

3. The ſuppoſition of ſuch a propenſion and inclination ſeems no way to ſuit with that ſtate of perfect reſt which the ſouls of the juſt enjoy in heaven. The ſcriptures tell us that at death they enter into reſt, [Iſa. lvii. 2.—Heb. iv. 9.] that they reſt from their labours, [Rev. xiv.

xiv. 13.] But that which inclines and desires (especially when the desired enjoyment, as in this case, is suspended so long) must be as far from rest, as it is from satisfaction in the enjoyment of the things desired. We know that Solomon hath observed of such a life, (and his observation is experimentally true) that hope deferred makes the heart sick, [Prov. xiii. 12.] who finds not his own desires a very rack to him in some cases? If we be kept but a few days in earnest expectation and desire of an absent friend, and he comes not, what an uneasy life do we live? but here we must suppose some have such an unsatisfied life for hundreds, and others for thousands of years already; and how much longer they may remain so, who can tell? We use to say, lovers hours are full of eternity. These reasons seem to carry it for the negative. But if the matter be weighed once more, with the following reasons in the counter scale, and prejudice do not pull down the balance, we shall find the contrary conclusion much more strong and rational. For,

1. The soul and body are the two essential constitutive parts of man; either of these being wanting, the man is not complete and perfect. The good of the whole is the good of the parts themselves; and every thing hath a natural desire and appetite to its own good and perfection. It is confessed, the soul, forasmuch as concerns itself singly, is made perfect, and enjoys blessedness in the absence of the body; but this is only the perfection and blessedness of one part of man: the other part, viz. the body, lyes in obscurity and corruption: and till both be blessed, and blessed together in a state of composition and re-union, the whole man is not made perfect: for this therefore the soul must wait.

2. Though death hath dissolved the union, yet it hath not destroyed the relation betwixt the soul and body; that dust is more to it than all the dust of the whole earth. Hence it is that the whole person of a believer is sometimes denominated from that part of him, namely, his body, which remains captivated by death in the grave. Hence II. Thes. iv. 15. dead believers are called those that sleep,

ſleep, which muſt needs properly reſpect the body, for the ſoul ſleeps not; and ſhews what a firm and dear relation ſtill remains betwixt theſe abſent friends. Now we all know the mighty power of a relation, if it be leaſt among entities, yet ſurely it is one of the greateſt things in the world in efficacy. It is difficult to bear the abſence of our dear relatives, eſpecially if we be in proſperity, and they in adverſity: as the caſe here is betwixt the ſpirits in heaven, and its body in the grave; this, aſſociated with angels, that, preyed upon by worms. Joſeph's caſe is the livelieſt emblem that occurs to my preſent thoughts to illuſtrate the point in hand. He was advanced to be Lord over all Egypt, living in the greateſt pomp and ſplendor there; but his father and brethren were at the ſame time ready to periſh in the land of Canaan. He had been many years ſeparated from them, but neither the length of time, nor honours of the court, could alienate his affections from them. O ſee the mighty power of relation! No ſooner doth he ſee his brethren, and underſtand their caſe, and the pining condition of Jacob his father, but his bowels yerned, and his compaſſions rolled together for them. Yea, he could not forbear, nor ſtifle his own affections, though he knew how injurious his brethren had been to him, and betrayed him, as the body hath the ſoul: yet all this notwithſtanding, he breaks forth into tears and outcries over them, which made the houſe ring again with the news that Joſeph's brethren were come. Nor could he be at reſt in the lap of honour and plenty, until he had gotten home his dear ancient relations to him. Thus ſtands the caſe betxixt ſoul and body.

III. The regret, reluctancy, and ſorrows expreſſed by the ſoul at parting, do ſtrongly argue its inclination to a re-union with it, when it is actually ſeparated from it. For why ſhould we ſurmiſe that the ſoul which mourned and groaned ſo deeply at parting, which claſped and embraced it ſo dearly and affectionately, which fought, ſtruggled, and diſputed the paſſage with death every foot and inch of ground it got, and would not part with the body till by plain force it was rent out of its arms, ſhould not, when

abſent, deſire to ſee and enjoy its old and endeared friend again? Hath it loſt its affection, though it continue its relation? That is very improbable. Or doth its advancement in heaven make it regardleſs of its body, which lyes in contempt and miſery? That is an effect which Chriſt's perſonal glory never produced in him towards us, nor a good man's preferment would produce in him to his poor and miſerable friends in this world, as we ſee in the caſe of Joſeph, but now inſtanced in. It is therefore harſh and incongruous to ſuppoſe the ſoul's love to the body was extinguiſhed in the parting hour, and that now, out of ſight, out of mind.

Object. But was it not urged before in oppoſition to this aſſertion, that the ſouls of the righteous looked upon their bodies as their priſons, and ſighed for deliverance by death, and greatly rejoiced in the hope and foreſight of that liberty death would reſtore them to? How doth this conſiſt with ſuch reluctancies at parting, and inclination to re-union?—*Sol.* The objection doth not ſuppoſe any man to be totally free from all reluctancies and unwillingneſs to die. The holieſt ſouls that ever lived in bodies of fleſh will give an unwilling ſhrug when it comes to the parting point, [II. Cor. v. 2.] But this their willingneſs to be gone ariſes from two other grounds, which make it conſiſtent enough with its reluctancies at parting, and inclination to a ſecond meeting. (1.) This willingneſs to die doth not ſuppoſe the ſoul's love to the body to be utterly extinguiſhed, but maſtered and overpowered by another and ſtronger love. There is in every Chriſtian a double love, one natural, to the body, and the things below; the other ſupernatural, to Chriſt and the things above: the latter doth not extinguiſh, though it conquer and ſubdue the other. Love to the body pulls backward, love to Chriſt pulls forward, and finally prevails. This is ſo conſiſtent with it, that it ſuppoſes natural reluctation and unwillingneſs to part. (2.) The willingneſs of God's people to be diſſolved, muſt not be underſtood abſolutely, but comparatively: in that ſenſe the apoſtle will be underſtood, [II. Cor. v. 8.] 'We are confident, I ſay, and willing

'willing rather to be abſent from the body, and preſent with 'the Lord,' (i. e.) rather than to live always a life of ſin, ſorrow, and abſence from God. Death is not deſirable in and for itſelf, but only as it is the ſoul's outlet from ſin, and its inlet to God. So that the very beſt deſire is but comparatively, and it is but few who find the love of this animal life ſubacted and overpowered by high-raiſed acts of faith and love. The generality even of good ſouls feel ſtrong renitencies, and ſuffer ſharp conflicts at their diſſolution. All which diſcovers with what lothneſs and unwillingneſs the ſoul unclaſps its arms to let go its body. Now as divines argue the frame of Chriſt's heart in heaven toward his people on earth, from all thoſe endearing paſſages and demonſtrations of love he gave them at parting; ſo we here argue the continued love and inclination of the ſoul to its body after it is in heaven, from the manifold demonſtrations it gave of its affection to it in this world, eſpecially in the parting hour. No conſiderations in all the world, leſs than the more full fruition of God, and freedom from ſin, could poſſibly have prevailed with it to quit the body, though but for a time, and leave it in the duſt. Which is our third argument.

IV. And as the dolorous parting hour evidenceth it, ſo doth the joy with which it receives it again at the reſurrection. If it part from it ſo heavily, and meet it again with joy unſpeakable; ſure then it ſtill retaineth much love for it, and deſires to be re-eſpouſed to it in the interval. Now that its meeting in the reſurrection is a day of joy to the ſoul, is evident, becauſe it is called the time of refreſhment, [Acts iii. 19.] And they 'awake with 'ſinging out of the duſt,' [Iſa. xxvi. 19.] If the direct and immediate ſcope of the prophet point not (as ſome think it doth) at the reſurrection, yet it is allowed by all to be a very lively alluſion to it; which is ſufficient for my purpoſe. And indeed none that underſtands and believes the deſign and buſineſs of that day can poſſibly doubt but there was reaſon enough to call it a time of refreſhment, a ſinging morning; for the ſouls of the righteous come from heaven with Chriſt, and the whole hoſt of

ſhouting angels; not to be ſpectators only, but the ſubject of that day's triumph. They come to re-aſſume, and be re-eſpouſed to their own bodies, this being the appointed time for God to vindicate and reſcue them from the tyrannical power of the grave, to endow them with ſpiritual qualities at their ſecond marriage to their ſouls, that in both parts they may be completely happy. O the joyful claſpings and dear embraces betwixt them, who but themſelves can underſtand! and by the way this removes the objection forementioned, of the miſeries and prejudices the ſoul ſuffered in this world in and from the body: for now it receives it a ſpiritual body, (i. e.) ſo ſubdued to, and fitted for the uſe of the ſpirit, as never to impede, clog, or obſtruct its motions and inclinations any more, [I. Cor. xv. 44.] in this hope it parted from it, and with this conſolation it now receives it again.

V. There are many ſcriptures which very much favour, if they do not poſitively conclude the ſoul's inclination to, and deſire to be re-united with its own body, even whilſt it is in the ſtate of its ſingle glorification in heaven; certainly our ſouls leave not our bodies at death, as the oſtrich doth her egg in the ſand, without any farther regard to it, or concernment for it, but they are repreſented as crying to God to remember, avenge, and vindicate them, [Rev. vi. 10, 11.] How long, Lord, how long wilt thou not avenge our blood? Our blood ſpeaks both the continued relation, and ſuitable affection they have to their abſent bodies. And to the ſame ſenſe a judicious and learned pen expounds that place, [Job xiv. 14.] (which is commonly, but I know not how fitly, accommodated to another purpoſe) 'All the days of my appointed time will I 'wait till my change come;' which words, by a diligent comparing of the context, appear to have this for their proper ſcope and ſenſe. Job in the former verſe had expreſſed his confidence by way of petition, that at a ſet and appointed time God would remember him, ſo as to recal him out of the grave; and now minded to ſpeak out more fully, puts the queſtion to himſelf, if a man die, ſhall he live again? And thus anſwers it, all the days of my appointed

pointed time (that is, of the appointed time which he mentioned before, when God ſhould revive him out of the duſt) will I wait till my change come; that is, that glorious change, when the corruption of a loathſome grave ſhould be exchanged for immortal glory, which he amplifies, and utters more expreſsly, [v. 15.] 'Thou ſhalt call, 'and I will anſwer; thou ſhalt have a deſire to the work 'of thy hands;' thou wilt not always forget to reſtore and perfect thine own creature. And ſurely this waiting is not the act of his inanimate ſleeping duſt, but of that part which ſhould be capable of ſuch an action; q. d. I, in that part which ſhall be ſtill alive, ſhall patiently wait the appointed time of reviving me in that part alſo, which death and the grave ſhall inſult over in a temporary triumph in the mean time. Upon theſe grounds I think the inclination of the ſeparated ſpirits of the juſt to their own bodies to be a juſtifiable opinion. As for the damned, we have no reaſon to think ſuch a re-union to be deſirable to them: for alas, it will be but the increaſe and aggravation of their torments; which conſideration is ſufficient to overpower and ſtifle the inclination of nature, and make the very thoughts of it horrid and dreadful. To what end (as the prophet ſpeaks in another caſe) is it for them to deſire that day? It will be a day of darkneſs and gloomineſs to them; re-union being deſigned to complete the happineſs of the one, and the miſery of the other. But before I take off my hand, and diſmiſs this queſtion, I muſt remember that I am debtor to two objections.

Object. 1. *The ſoul can both live and act ſeparate from the body, it needs it not; and if it do not want, why ſhould it deſire it?*—*Sol.* The life and actings of the glorified are conſiderable two ways; (1.) Singly and abſtractedly for the life and action of one part; and ſo we confeſs the ſoul lives happily, and acts forth its own powers freely in the ſtate of ſeparation. (2.) Perſonally, or concretely, as it is in the life and action of the whole man, and ſo it doth both need and deſire the conjunction and re-union of the body: for the body is not only a part of Chriſt's

purchaſe as well as the ſoul, and is to have its own glory as well as it, but it is alſo a conſtitutive part of a complete glorified perſon; and ſo conſidered, the ſaints are not perfectly happy till this re-union be effected, which is the true ground and reaſon of this its deſire.

Object. 2. *But this hypotheſis ſeems to thwart the account given in ſcripture of the reſt and placid ſtate of ſeparate ſouls: for look, as bodies which gravitate and propend, do not reſt, ſo neither do ſouls which incline and deſire.*—*Sol.* There is a vaſt difference betwixt the tendencies and propenſions of ſouls in the way to glory, and in glory: we that are abſent from the Lord, can find no reſt in the way; but thoſe that are with the Lord can reſt in Jeſus, and yet wait without anxiety, or ſelf-torturing impatience, for the accompliſhment of the promiſes to their abſent bodies, [Rev. vi. 10, 11.]

Let this provoke us all to get ſanctified ſouls to rule and uſe theſe their bodies now for God: this will abundantly ſweeten their parting at death, and their meeting again at the reſurrection of the juſt; elſe their parting will be doleful, and their next meeting dreadful. And ſo much for the doctrine of ſeparation. Our way is now open to the improvement and uſe of this excellent ſubject and doctrine of ſeparation; and certainly it affords as rich an entertainment for our affections, as for our minds, in the following uſes; of which the firſt will be for our information in ſix practical inferences.

I. If this be the life and ſtate of gracious ſouls after their ſeparation from the body, *Then holy perſons ought not to entertain diſmal and terrifying thoughts of their own diſſolution.* The apprehenſions and thoughts of death ſhould have a peculiar pleaſantneſs in the minds of believers: you have heard into what a bleſſed preſence and communion death introduceth your ſouls; how it leads you out of a body of ſin, a world of ſorrows, the ſociety of imperfect ſaints, to an innumerable company of angels and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, to that lovely Mount Sion, to the heavenly ſanctuary, to the bleſſed viſions of the face of God. O methinks there hath been enough ſaid to make all the ſouls in whom the well-grounded

hopes of the life of glory are found, to cry out with the apoſtle, 'We are confident, I ſay, yea, and willing, rather to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the 'Lord,' [II. Cor. v. 8.] When good Muſculus drew near his end, how ſweet and pleaſant was this meditation to his ſoul! Hear his ſwan-like ſong:

Cold death my heart invades, my life doth fly;
O Chriſt, my everlaſting life! draw nigh.
Why quivereſt thou, my ſoul, within my breaſt?
Thine angel's come to lead thee to thy reſt:
Quit cheerfully this drooping houſe of clay;
God will reſtore it in th' appointed day.
Has't ſinn'd? I know it, let not that be urg'd,
For Chriſt thy ſins with his own blood hath purg'd.
Is death affrighting? True, but yet withal
Conſider Chriſt through death to life doth call:
He triumphs over Satan, ſin, and death;
Therefore with joy reſign thy dying breath.

Much in the ſame cheerful frame was the heart of dying Bullinger, when his mournful friends expreſſed their ſenſe of the loſs they ſhould ſuſtain by his removal. "Why, (ſaid he) if God will make any farther uſe of my labours in the miniſtry, he will renew my ſtrength, and I will gladly ſerve him; but if he pleaſe (as I deſire he would) to call me hence, I am ready to obey his will; and nothing more pleaſant can befal me, than to leave this ſinful and miſerable world to go to my Saviour Chriſt." O that all who are out of the danger of death, were thus got out of the dread of death too! Let them only tremble, and be convulſed at the thoughts and ſight of death, whoſe ſouls muſt fall into the hands of a ſin-revenging God by the ſtroke of death; who are to breath out their laſt hope with their laſt breath. Death is yours, ſaith the apoſtle, [I. Cor. iii. 22.] your friend, your privilege, your paſſage to heaven; it is your ignorance of it which breeds your fears about it.

II. *Gather from hence the abſolute indiſpenſable neceſſity of your union with Chriſt before your diſſolution by death.* Wo to that ſoul which ſhall be ſeparated from its body before it be united with Chriſt: none but the ſpirits of juſt men made

made perfect at death. Righteous ſouls are the only qualified ſubjects of bleſſedneſs.

It is true, every ſoul hath a natural capacity of happineſs, but gracious ſouls only have an actual meetneſs for glory. The ſcripture tells us in round and plain words, that, 'without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord,' [Heb. xii. 14.] that 'Except we be regenerate and born again, 'we cannot ſee the kingdom of God,' [John iii. 3.]—You make the greateſt adventure that ever was made by man; indeed an adventure infinitely too great for any man to make, when you ſhoot the gulf of vaſt eternity upon terms of hazard and uncertainty. What thinkeſt thou, reader? Dareſt thou adventure thy ſoul and eternal happineſs upon it, that the work of regeneration and ſanctification, that very ſame work of grace which the Spirit of God hangs all thy hopes of heaven upon, in theſe ſcriptures, is truly wrought by him in thy ſoul? Conſider it well, and pauſe upon it again and again before thou go forth. Should a miſtake be committed here, (and nothing is more eaſy or common all the world over than ſuch miſtakes) thou art irrecoverably gone. This venture can be made but once, and the miſcarriage is never to be retrieved afterwards; thou haſt not another ſoul to adventure, nor a ſecond adventure to make of this. Well might the apoſtle Peter call for all diligence to make our calling and election ſure:—that can never be made too ſure, which is ſo invaluable in its worth, and to be but once adventured.

III. *How prejudicial is it to dying men to be then incumbered, diverted, and diſtracted about earthly concernments, when the time of their departure is at hand!* The buſineſs and employment of dying perſons is of ſo vaſt importance and weight, that every moment of their time need to be carefully ſaved and applied to this their preſent and moſt important concern. How well ſoever you have improved the time of life, believe it, you will find work enough upon your hands at death: dying hours will be found to be buſy and laborious hours, even to the moſt painful, ſerious, and induſtrious ſouls, whoſe life hath been moſtly

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ſpent in preparation for death. Leave not the proper buſineſs of others to that day; for that day will have buſineſs enough of its own. Sufficient for that day are the labours thereof. Let a few conſiderations be pondered to clear and confirm this inference.

1. The buſineſs and employment of dying perſons is of the moſt ſerious, awful, and ſolemn nature and importance; it is their laſt preparatory work on earth, to their immediate appearance before God their judge, [Heb. ix. 27.] it is their ſhooting the gulph into eternity, and leaving this world, and all their acquaintance and intereſts therein for ever, [Iſa. xxviii. 11.] It is therefore a work by itſelf to die; a work requiring the moſt intenſe, deep, and undiſturbed exerciſes of all the abilities and graces of the inner man; and all little enough. 2. Time is exceeding precious with dying men; the laſt ſand is ready to fall, and therefore not to be waſted as it was wont to be. When we had a fair proſpect of many years before us, we made little account of an hour or day; but now one of thoſe hours which we ſo careleſly laviſhed away, is of more value than all this world to us; eſpecially if the whole weight of eternity ſhould hang upon it (as oftentimes it doth) then the loſs of that portion of time is the loſs of ſoul, body, and hope for evermore. 3. Much of that little precious time of departing ſouls will be unavoidably taken up and employed about the preſſing call and neceſſities of diſtreſſed nature; all that you can do for your ſouls muſt then be done by fits and ſnatches, in the midſt of many diſturbances, and frequent interruptions; ſo that it is rarely found that a dying man can purſue a ſerious meditation with calm and fixed thoughts; for beſides the pains and faintings of the body, the abilities of the mind uſually fail. Here alſo they fall into a ſad dilemma; if they do not with the utmoſt intention of mind fix their hearts and thoughts on Chriſt, they loſe their comfort, if godly, and their ſouls, if ungodly; and if they do, friends and phyſicians aſſure them they will deſtroy their bodies. Theſe are the ſtraits of men bordering cloſe upon eternity; they muſt haſtily catch a few moments

moments in the intervals of pain, and then are put by all again. 4. There is no man living but hath ſomething to do for his own ſoul in a dying hour, and ſomething for others alſo. Suppoſe the beſt that can be ſuppoſed, that the ſoul be in real union with Chriſt, and that union be alſo clear; yet it is ſeldom found but there are ſome aſſaults of Satan; or if not, yet how many relations and friends need our experiences and counſels at ſuch a time? How many things ſhall we have to do after our great and main work is done? And others have a great deal more to do, though as ſafe as the former. O the knots and objections that are then to be diſſolved and anſwered! The unuſual onſets and aſſaults of Satan that are then to be reſiſted! And yet moſt dying perſons have much more upon their hands than either of the former. The whole work of repentance and faith is to do when time is even done. 5. Few, yea, very few are found furniſhed with wiſdom, experience, and faithfulneſs to give dying perſons any conſiderable aſſiſtance in ſoul affairs: it may be there may be found among the viſitants of the ſick now and then a perſon who hath a word of wiſdom in his heart; but then either he wants opportunity, or courage and faithfulneſs, to do the part of a true ſpiritual friend. Elihu deſcribes the perſon ſo qualified as he ought for this work, [Job xxxiii. 23, 24.] and calls him 'One among a thouſand.' Some are too cloſe and reſerved, others too trifling and impertinent: ſome are willing, but want ability; others are able, but want faithfulneſs; ſome cut too deep by uncharitable cenſoriouſneſs, others ſkin over the wound too ſlightly, ſpeaking peace where God and conſcience ſpeak none. So that little help is to be expected. 6. How much therefore doth it deſerve to be lamented, that where there is ſo much to do, ſo little time to do it, and ſo few to help in the beſt improvements of it, all ſhould be loſt as to their ſouls by earthly incumbrances and worldly affairs, which might have been done ſooner and better in a more proper ſeaſon! O therefore let me perſuade all men to take heed of bringing the proper buſineſs of healthful days to their ſick beds!

IV. *What*

IV. *What an excellent creature is the ſoul of man, which is capable, not only of ſuch preparations for God whilſt it is in the body, but of ſuch ſights and enjoyments of God when it lives without a body!* Here the Spirit of God works upon it in the way of grace and ſanctification, [Eph. ii. 10.]—The ſcope and deſign of this his workmanſhip is to qualify and make us meet for the life of heaven, [II. Cor. v. 5.] For this ſelf-ſame thing or purpoſe our ſouls are wrought or moulded by grace into quite another frame and temper than that which nature gave them; and when he hath wrought out and finiſhed all that he intends to be wrought in the way of ſanctification, then ſhall it be called up to the higheſt enjoyments and employments for ever that a creature is ſuſceptible of. Herein the dignity of the ſoul appears, that no other creature in this world beſide it hath a natural capacity, either to be ſanctified inherently in this world, or glorified everlaſtingly in that to come, to be transformed into the image, and filled with the joy of the Lord. There are myriads of other ſouls in this world beſides ours, but to none of them is the ſpirit of ſanctification ſent, but only to ours. The ſouls of animals ſerve only to move the dull and ſluggiſh matter, and take in for a few days the ſenſitive pleaſures of the creation, and ſo expire, having no natural capacity of, or deſignation for an higher employment or enjoyment. And it deſerves a moſt ſerious animadverſion, that this vaſt capacity of the ſoul for eternal bleſſedneſs muſt of neceſſity make it capable of ſo much the more miſery and ſelf-torment, if at laſt it fail of that bleſſedneſs; for it is apparent they do not periſh becauſe they are uncapable, but becauſe they are unwilling; not becauſe their ſouls wanted any natural faculty that others have, but becauſe they would not open thoſe they have to receive Chriſt in the way of faith and obedience, as others did. Think upon this, you that live only to eat, and drink, and ſleep, and play, as the birds and beaſts of the field do; what need was there of a reaſonable ſoul for ſuch ſenſual employments? Do not your noble faculties ſpeak your deſignation for higher uſes? And will you not wiſh to exchange ſouls with the

moſt vile and deſpicable animal in this world, if it were poſſible to be done? Certainly it were better for you to have no capacity of eternal bleſſedneſs, (as they have not) if you do not enjoy it; and no capacity of torment beyond this life, (as they have not) if you muſt certainly endure it.

V. *If our ſouls and bodies muſt be ſeparated ſhortly, how patiently ſhould we bear all leſſer ſeparations that may or will be made betwixt us and any other enjoyments in this world?* No union is ſo intimate, ſtrict and dear, as that betwixt your ſouls and bodies. All your relatious and enjoyments in this world hang looſer from your ſouls, than your bodies do; and if it be your duty patiently and ſubmiſſively to ſuffer a painful parting pull from your bodies, it is your duty to ſuffer meekly and patiently a ſeparation from other things, which are but a prelude to it, and a mere ſhadow of it. It is good to put ſuch caſes to ourſelves in the midſt of our pleaſant enjoyments. I have now many comfortable relatives in the world—wife, children, kindred, and friends; God hath made them pleaſant to me, but he may bereave me of all theſe. Doth not Providence ring ſuch changes all the world over? Are not all kingdoms, cities, and towns full of the ſighs and laments of widows, orphans, and friends bereaved of their pleaſant and uſeful relations? But if God will have it ſo, it is our duty to bound our ſorrows, remembering 'the 'time is ſhort,' [1. Cor. vii. 29.] In a few days we muſt be ſtripped much nearer, even out of our own bodies by death. God may alſo ſeparate betwixt me and my health by ſickneſs, ſo that the pleaſure of this world ſhall be cut off from me; but ſickneſs is not death, though it be a prelude and ſtep towards it: I may well bear this with patience, who muſt ſubmiſſively bear ſharper pains than theſe ere long. Yea, and well may I bear this ſubmiſſively, conſidering that by ſuch imbittering and weaning providences God is preparing me for a much eaſier diſſolution than if I ſhould live at eaſe in the body all my days, till death come to make ſo great and ſudden a change upon me. God may alſo ſeparate betwixt me and my liberty

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by reſtraint. It hath been the lot of the beſt men that ever were in the world; and if it ſhould be ours alſo, we ſhould not be much ſtartled at it, conſidering theſe bodies of ours muſt be ſhortly pent up in a ſtraiter, darker, and more loathſome place of confinement, than any priſon in this world can be. The grave is a darker place, [Job. xvii. 13.] and your abode there will be longer, [Eccl. xi. 8.] Theſe and all other our outward enjoyments are ſeparable things, and it is good thus to alleviate our loſs of them.

VI. *How heavenly ſhould the tempers and frames of thoſe ſouls be who are candidates for heaven, and muſt be ſo ſhortly numbered with the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* It is reaſonable that we all begin to be, that which we expect to be for ever; to learn that way of living and converſing, which we believe muſt be our everlaſting life and buſineſs in the world to come. Let them that hope to live with angels in heaven, learn to live like angels on earth, in holineſs, activity, and ready obedience.

There is the greateſt reaſon that our minds be there where our ſouls are to be for ever. A ſpiritual mind will be found poſſible, congruous, ſweet, and evidential of an intereſt in that glory, to all thoſe holy ſouls who are preparing and deſigned for it. 1. It is poſſible, notwithſtanding the clogs and entanglements of the body, to be heavenly minded. Others have attained it, [Phil. iii. 20.] Two things make a heavenly converſation poſſible to men, viz. The natural abilities, and the gracious principles of the mind. (1.) The natural abilities of the mind, that can in a minute's time diſpatch a nimble meſſenger to heaven, and mount its thoughts from this to that world in a trice. The power of cogitation is a rich endowment of the ſoul, ſuch as no other creature on earth is participant of.—Though ſpiritual thoughts be not the natural growth of the ſoul, yet thoughts capable of being ſpiritualized are. And without this ability of projecting thoughts, all intercourſe muſt have been cut off. (2.) The gracious principles implanted in the ſoul do actually incline the mind, and mount its thoughts heavenward. Yea, this will

prove more than a poſſibility of a converſation in heaven; whilſt ſaints tabernacle on earth in bodies of fleſh, it will almoſt prove an impoſſibility that it ſhould be otherwiſe; for theſe ſpiritual principles ſetting the bent and tendency of the heart heavenward, we muſt act againſt the very law of our new nature, when we place our affections elſewhere. 2. A mind in heaven is moſt congruous, decorous, and comely for thoſe that are the enrolled inhabitants of that heavenly city. Where ſhould a Chriſtian's love be, but where his Lord is? our hearts and our homes do not uſe to be long aſunder. It becomes you ſo to think, and ſo to ſpeak now, as thoſe who make account to be ſhortly ſinging Hallelujahs before the throne. 3. It is moſt ſweet and delightful: no pleaſure in all this world comparable to this pleaſure, [Rom. viii. 6.] 'To be ſpiritually minded is life and peace:' it is a young heaven born in the ſoul in its way thither. 4. To conclude: it is evidential of our intereſt in it: an agreeable frame is the ſureſt title, [Col. ii. 1, 2.—Matt. vi. 21.] If heaven attract your minds now, it will center them for ever.

USE II. This doctrine of the ſeparation of the ſpirits of the juſt from their bodies, as it lyes before you in this diſcourſe, affords a ſingular help to all the people of God, to entertain lovely and pleaſant thoughts of that day, to make death not only an unregretted, but a moſt pleaſant and deſirable thing to their ſouls. I know there is a pure, ſimple, natural fear of death, by which you muſt not expect to be perfectly freed by all the arguments in the world. And there is a reverential, awful fear of death, which it would be your prejudice and loſs to have deſtroyed. You will have a natural, and ought to have a reverential fear of death: the one flows from your ſenſitive, the other from your ſanctified nature. But it is a third ſort of fear, which doth you all the miſchief, a fear ſpringing in gracious ſouls out of the wickedneſs of their graces, and the ſtrength of their unmortified affections; a fear ariſing partly out of the darkneſs of our mind, and partly out of the ſenſuality and earthlineſs of our hearts; this fear is that which ſo convulſeth our ſouls, when death

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is near, and imbitters our lives, even whilſt it is at a diſtance. He that hath been overheated in his affections to this world, and overcooled by diviſions and temptations, neglects and intermiſſions to that world, cannot chuſe but give an unwilling ſhrug, if not a frightful ſcreech, at the appearance of death. And this being the ſad caſe of too many good and upright ſouls for the main; and there being ſo few even among ſerious Chriſtians that have attained to that courage and complacence in the thoughts of death, which the apoſtle ſpeaks of II. Cor. v. 8. to be both confident and willing rather to be abſent from the body, and to be preſent with the Lord; I will from this diſcourſe furniſh them with ſome ſpecial aſſiſtance therein. But withall, I muſt tell you upon what great diſadvantage I am here to diſpute with your fears: ſo ſtrong is the current of natural and vicious fear, that except a ſpecial hand of God back and ſet on the arguments that ſhall be urged, they will be as eaſily ſwept away before it, as ſo many ſtraws by a rapid torrent; nor will it be to any more purpoſe to oppoſe my breath to them, than to the tides and waves of the ſea.

Moreover, I am fully convinced by long and often experience, how unſteady and inconſtant the frames and tempers of the beſt hearts are: and that if it be not full home, yet it is next to an impoſſibility to fix them in ſuch a temper as this I aim at, is. Where is that man to be found, who after the revolutions of many years, and in thoſe years, various diſpenſations of Providence without him, altering his condition, and greater variety of temptations within, can yet ſay, notwithſtanding all thoſe various diſpenſations of providence without him, altering his condition, and greater variety of temptation within, can yet ſay, notwithſtanding all theſe various aſpects and poſitions, his heart hath ſtill held one ſteady and invariable tenor and courſe? Alas! there be very few (if any) of ſuch ſound and athletic temper of mind, whoſe pulſe beats with an even ſtroke, through all inequalities of condition; alike free and willing at one time, as another, to be uncloathed of the body, and to be with Chriſt. This

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height of faith, and depth of mortification; this ſtrength of love to Chriſt, and ardor of holy deſire, are degrees of grace to which very few attain. The caſe ſtanding thus, it is no more than needs to urge all ſorts of arguments upon our timorous and unſteady hearts; and it is likely to prove a hard and difficult taſk to bring the heart but to a quiet and unregretting ſubmiſſion to the appointment of God herein, though ſubmiſſion be one of the loweſt ſteps of duty in this caſe. If it be hard to fix our thoughts but an hour on ſuch an unpleaſing ſubject as death; how hard muſt it be to bring over the conſent of the will? If we cannot endure it at a diſtance in our thoughts; how ſhall we embrace and hug it in our boſoms? If our thoughts fly back with diſtaſte and impatience, no wonder if our will be obſtinate and refractory. We muſt firſt prevail with our thoughts to fix themſelves, and think cloſe to ſuch a ſubject before it can be expected we cheerfully reſign ourſelves into the hands of death. We cannot be willing to go along with death till we have ſome acquaintance with it; and acquainted with it we cannot be, till we accuſtom ourſelves to think aſſiduouſly and calmly of it. They that have dwelt many years at death's door, both in reſpect of the condition of their bodies, and diſpoſition of their minds, yet find reluctancy enough when it comes to the point.

Object. *But if ſeparation from the body be (as it is) an enemy to nature, and there be no poſſibility to extinguiſh natural averſation; to what purpoſe is it to argue and perſuade, where there is no expectation of ſucceſs?—Sol.* Death is conſiderable two ways by the people of God. 1. As an enemy to nature. 2. As a medium to glory. If we conſider it ſimply in itſelf, as an enemy to nature, there is nothing in it for which we ſhould deſire it: but if we conſider it as a medium or paſſage into glory; yea, the only ordinary way through which all the ſaints muſt paſs out of this into a better ſtate; ſo it will appear not only tolerable, but deſirable to prepared ſouls. Were there not a ſhore of glory on the other ſide of theſe black waters of death, for my own part I ſhould rather chuſe to live meanly, than to

die eaſily. If both parts were to periſh at death, there were no reaſon to perſuade one to be willing to deliver up the other. It were a madneſs for the ſoul to deſire to be diſſolved, if it were ſo far from being better out of the body, than in it, that it ſhould have no being at all. But Chriſtians, let me tell you, death is ſo far from being a bar, that it is a bridge in your way to glory, and you are never like to come thither but by paſſing over it: except therefore you will look beyond it, you will never ſee any deſirableneſs in it. I deſire to be diſſolved (ſaith Paul) and to be with Chriſt; which is far better. To be with death is ſad, but to be with Chriſt is ſweet: to endure the pains of death is doleful; but to ſee the face of Chriſt is joyful. To part with your pleaſant habitations is irkſome, but to be lodged in the heavenly manſions is moſt delightful. A parting hour with dear relations is cutting, but a meeting hour with Chriſt is tranſporting. To be rid of our bodies is not pleaſing; but to be rid of ſin, and that for ever, what can be more pleaſing to a gracious ſoul? You ſee then in what ſenſe I preſent death as a deſirable thing to the people of God. And therefore, ſeeing nature teacheth us (as the apoſtle ſpeaks) to put the more abundant comelineſs upon the uncomely parts; ſuffer me to dreſs up death in its beſt ornaments, and preſent it to you in the following arguments, as a beautiful and comely object of your conditional and well regulated deſires. And,

1. *If upon a fair and juſt account there ſhall appear to be more gain to believers in death, than there is in life: reaſon muſt needs vote death to be better to them that are in Chriſt, than life can be; and conſequently it ſhould be deſirable in their eyes.* It is a clear dictate of reaſon in caſe of choice to chuſe that which is beſt for us. Who is there that freely exerciſes reaſon and choice together, that will not do ſo?—What merchant will not part with a hundred pounds worth of glaſs beads and pendants for a ton of gold? a few tinſel toys for as many rich diamonds? *Mercatura eſt amittere, ut lucreris?* That is true merchandize, to part with things of leſſer, for things of greater value. Now if you will

will be tried and determined by God's book of rates, then the caſe is determined quickly, and the advantage exceedingly upon death's ſide, [Phil. i. 21.] 'To me to live, 'is Chriſt; and to die, is gain.'

Object. *True, it might be ſo to Paul, who was eminent in grace and ripe for glory; but it may be loſs to others, who have not attained the height of his holineſs or aſſurance.*—*Sol.* The true and plain ſenſe of the objection is this, whether heaven and Chriſt be as much gain to him that enjoys them, though behind others both in grace and obedience, as it is to them who are more eminent in grace, and have done and ſuffered more for their ſake? And let it be determined by yourſelves. But if your meaning be, that Paul was ready for death, and ſo are not you; his work and courſe was almoſt comfortably finiſhed, and ſo is not yours; his death therefore muſt needs be gain to him, but it may be loſs to you, even the loſs of all that you are worth for ever.

To this I ſay, the wiſdom of God orders the time of his people's death, as well as all other circumſtances about it; and in this your hearts may be at perfect reſt, that being in Chriſt you can never die to your loſs, die when you will. I know you will reply, that if your union with Chriſt were clear, the controverſy were ended; but then you muſt alſo conſider, they are as ſafe who die by an act of recumbency upon Chriſt, as thoſe that die in the fulleſt aſſurance of their intereſt in him. And beſide, your reluctancies and averſations to death are none of your way to aſſurance; but ſuch a ſtrong averſation to ſin, and ſuch a vehement deſire after and love to Chriſt, as can make you willing to quit all that is dear and deſirable to you in this world for his ſake, is the very next door or ſtep to aſſurance: and if the Lord bring your hearts to this frame, and fix them there, it is not likely you will be long without it. But to return, Paul had here valued life with a full allowance of all the benefits and advantages of it, 'To me to live is Chriſt,' that is, if I live, I ſhall live in communion with Chriſt, and ſervice for Chriſt, and in the midſt of all thoſe comforts

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which uſually reſult from both. Here is life with the moſt weighty and deſirable benefits of it laid in one ſcale, and he lays death, and probably a violent death too (for of that he ſpeaks afterwards, chap. ii. 17.) in the other ſcale; thus he fills the ſcales, and the balance breaks on death's ſide; yea, it comes down with a πωλλῷ μᾶλλον χρεῖσσον, a far, far better. But here he falls in (as Mr. How obſerves) a rub in the way: there are in this caſe two judges, the fleſh and the ſpirit, and they cannot agree upon the values, but contradict each other. Nature ſaith, it is far, far better to live than to die, and will not be beaten off from it. What then? I hope you will not put blind and partial nature in competition with God alſo, as you do life with death. But ſeeing nature can plead ſo powerfully, as well as grace, let us hear what thoſe ſtrong reaſons are that are urged by the fleſh on life's ſide, and what the ſoul hath to reply and plead on death's ſide, (for the body can plead, and that charmingly too, though not by words and ſounds, and then determine the matter as we ſhall ſee cauſe; but be ſure prejudice pull not down the balance.

1. *The pleas of nature for life, and againſt diſſolution.* And here the doleful voice of nature laments, pleads, and bemoans itſelf to the willing ſoul: "O my ſoul, what doſt thou mean by theſe thy deſires to be diſſolved? Art thou in earneſt, when thou ſayeſt thou art willing to leave thine own body and be gone? Conſider, and think again ere thou bid me farewel, what thou art to me, and what I have been and am to thee: thou art my ſoul, that is, my prop, my beauty, my honour, my life, and indeed all that is comfortable to me. If thou depart, what am I but a ſpectacle of pity, an abhorred carcaſe in a few moments; a prey to the worms, a captive to death? If thou depart, my candle is put out, and I am left in the horrors of darkneſs. I am thy houſe, thy delightful habitation, the houſe in which thou haſt dwelt from the firſt moment of thy creatiou, and never lodged one night in any other: every room in me hath one way or another been a banquetting room for thy

entertainment, a room of pleaſure: all my ſenſes have been purveyors for my delight; my members have all of them been thy inſtruments and ſervants to execute thy commands and pleaſure. If thou and I part, it muſt be in a ſhower: thou ſhalt feel ſuch pain, ſuch travailing throes, ſuch deep, emphatical groans, ſuch ſweats, ſuch agonies as thou never feltſt before. For death hath ſomewhat of anguiſh peculiar to itſelf, and which is unknown though gueſſed at by the living. Beſides, whenever thou leaveſt me, thou leaveſt all that is and hath beeen comfortable to thee in this world: thy houſe ſhall know thee no more, [Job vii. 10.] thy lands, thy money, thy trade, which have coſt thee ſo many careful thoughts; and yielded thee ſo many refreſhments, ſhall be thine no longer: death will ſtrip thee out of all theſe, and leave thee naked. Thou haſt alſo, ſince thou becameſt mine, contracted manifold relations in the world, which I know are dear unto thee. I know it by coſtly experience: how haſt thou made me to wear and waſte myſelf in labours, cares, and watchings for them? But if thou wilt be gone, all theſe muſt be left expoſed, God knows to what wants, abuſes, and miſeries; for I can do nothing for them or myſelf, if once thou leave me. Thus it charms and pleads; thus it layeth as it were violent hands upon the ſoul, and ſaith, O my ſoul, thou ſhalt not depart; it hangs about it much as the wife and children of good Galeacius Carracciolus did about him, when he was leaving Italy to go to Geneva (a lively emblem of the caſe before us.) It ſaith to the ſoul, as Joab did to David, thou haſt ſhamed my face this day, in that thou loveſt thine enemy death, and hateſt me thy friend. O my ſoul, my life, my darling, my dear and only one, let nothing but unavoidable neceſſity part thee and me!" All this the fleſh can plead, and a great deal more than this, and that a thouſand times more powerfully and feelingly than any words can plead the caſe. And all its arguments are backed by ſenſe; ſight and feeling atteſt what nature ſpeaks.

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2. *The pleas of faith in behalf of death.* Let us in the next place weigh the pleas and reaſons which, notwithſtanding all this, do overpower and prevail with the believing ſoul to be gone, and quit its own body, and return no more to the elementary world.

And thus the power of faith and love enable it to reply; my dear body, the companion and partner of my comforts and troubles in the days of my pilgrimage on earth, great is my love, and ſtrong are the bonds of my affections to thee. Thou haſt been tenderly, yea, exceſſively beloved by me: my cares and fears for thee have been inexpreſſible; and nothing but the love of Jeſus Chriſt is ſtrong enough to gain my conſent to part with thee: thy intereſt in my affections is great, but as great as it is, and as much as I prize thee, I can ſhake thee off, and thruſt thee aſide to go Chriſt. Nor may this ſeem abſurd or unreaſonable, conſidering that God never deſigned thee for a manſion, but only a temporary tabernacle to me; it is true, I have had ſome comfort during my abode in thee, but I enjoyed thoſe comforts only in thee, not from thee; and many more I might have enjoyed, hadſt thou not been a ſnare and clog to me. It is thou that haſt eaten up my time, and diſtracted my thoughts, enſnared my affections, and drawn me under much ſin and ſorrow.—However, though we may weep over each other as acceſſaries to the ſins and miſeries we have drawn upon ourſelves, yet in this is our joint relief, that the blood of Chriſt hath cleanſed us both from all ſin; and therefore I can part the more eaſily and comfortably from thee, becauſe I part in hope to receive and enjoy thee in a far better condition than I leave thee. It is for both our intereſt to part for a time; for mine, becauſe I ſhall thereby be freed and delivered from ſin and ſorrow, and immediately obtain reſt with God, and the ſatisfaction of all my deſires in his preſence and enjoyment, which there is no other way to obtain, but by ſeparation from thee: and why ſhould I live a groaning, burdened, reſtleſs life always, to gratify thy fond and irrational deſires? If thou lovedſt me, thou wouldſt rejoice, and not repine at my happineſs. Parents

willingly part with their children at the greateſt diſtance for their preferment, how dearly ſoever they love them; and doſt thou envy or repine at mine? I lived many months a ſuffocating, obſcure life with thee in the womb, and neither thou nor I had ever taſted or experienced the comforts of this world, and the various delights of ſenſe, if we had not caſt the ſecundine, and ſtruggled hard for an entrance into this world. And now we are here, alas! though thou art contented to abide, I live in thee; but as we both lived in the womb, an obſcure, uneaſy, and unſuitable life. Thou canſt feed upon material bread, and delight thyſelf amidſt the variety of ſenſitive objects thou findeſt here; but what are all theſe things to me? I cannot ſubſiſt by them; that which is food to thee, is but chaff, wind and vanity to me. If I ſtay with thee, I ſhall be ſtill ſinging and ſtill groaning; when I leave thee, I ſhall be immediately freed from both, and arrive at the ſum and perfection of all my hopes, deſires, and whatſoever I have aimed at, and laboured for, in all the duties of my life. Let us therefore be content to part. Shrink not at the horrour of the grave: it is indeed a dark and ſolitary houſe, and the days of darkneſs may be many; but to thee, my dear companion, it ſhall be a bed of reſt; yea, a perfumed bed, where thy Lord Jeſus lay before thee. And let the time of thy abode there be never ſo long, thou ſhalt not meaſure it, nor find the leaſt tedioufneſs in it. A thouſand years there ſhall ſeem no more in the morning of the reſurrection than the ſweeteſt nap of an hour long ſeemed to be, when I was wont to lay thee upon thy bed to reſt. The worms in the grave ſhall be nothing to thee, nor give thee the thouſandth part of that trouble that a flee was wont to do. And though I leave thee, Jeſus Chriſt ſhall watch in the mean time over thy duſt, and not ſuffer a grain of it to be loſt. And I will return aſſuredly to thee again at the time apointed: I take not an everlaſting farewell of thee, but depart for a time, that I may receive thee for ever. To conclude: there is an unavoidable neceſſity of our parting; whether willing or unwilling, we muſt be ſeparated; but the conſent of my will to part

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with thee for the enjoyment of Jeſus Chriſt will be highly acceptable to God, and as a lump of ſugar to ſweeten the bitter cup of death to us both. This and much more, the gracious ſoul hath to ſay for its ſeparation from the body, by which it is eaſy to diſcern where the gain and advantage of death lyes to all believers; and conſequently how much it muſt be every way their intereſt to be unbodied.

2. To be weary of the body upon the pure account and reaſon of our hatred of ſin, and longing deſires after Jeſus Chriſt, argues ſtrongly grace in truth, and grace in ſtrength; it is both the teſt of our ſincerity, and the meaſure of our attainment, and maturity of grace; and upon both accounts highly covetable by all the people of God. It is ſo great an evidence of the truth of grace, that the ſcriptures have made it the deſcriptive periphraſis of a Chriſtian: ſo we find it in II. Tim. iv. 8. the crown of life is there promiſed to all them that love the appearance of Chriſt; *i. e.* thoſe that love to think of it, that delight to ſteep their thoughts in ſubjects belonging to the other world, and caſt many a yearning look that way: and II. Pet. iii. 12. they are deſcribed to be ſuch as are looking for and haſtening to the coming of the day of God. Their earneſt expectations and longings do not only put them upon making all the haſte they can to be with Chriſt, but it makes the interpoſing time ſeem ſo tedious and ſlow, that with their moſt vehement wiſhes and deſires they do what they can to accelerate and haſten it, as Rev. xxii. 'Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly.' Lovers hours, ſaith the proverb, are full of eternity. "O (ſaith Mr. Rutherford) that Chriſt would make long ſtrides! O that he would fold up the heavens as an old cloak, and ſhovel time and days out of the way!" Such deſires as theſe can ſpring from none but gracious and renewed ſouls; for nature is wholly diſaffected to a removal hence upon ſuch motives and conſiderations as theſe. If others wiſh at any time for death, it is but in a pet, a preſent paſſion provoked by ſome intolerable anguiſh, or great diſtreſs of nature.—But to look and long, and haſten to the other world, out

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of a wearineſs of ſin and an hearty willingneſs to be with Chriſt, ſuppoſes neceſſarily a deep rooted hatred of ſin, abhorring it more than death itſelf, the greateſt of natural evils: and a real ſight of things inviſible by the eye of faith, without which it is impoſſible any man's heart ſhould be thus framed and tempered. And as it evidenceth the truth, ſo alſo the ſtrength and maturity of grace: for alas! how many thouſands of gracious ſouls that love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity, are to be found quite below this temper of mind? O it is but here and there one among the Lord's own people that have reached this height and eminence of faith and love. It is with the fruits of the ſpirit, juſt as it is with the fruits of the earth; ſome are green and raw, others are ripe and mellow: the firſt ſtick faſt on the branches, you may ſhake and ſhake again, and not one will drop: or as thoſe fruits that grow in the hedges, with their coats and integuments enwrapping them, as nuts, &c. you may try your ſtrength upon them, and ſooner break your nails, than diſcloſe and ſeparate them, ſo faſt and cloſe do the huſk ſtick to them: but when time and the influences of heaven have ripened and brought them to their perfection, the apples drop into your hands without the leaſt touch, and the nut falls out of its caſe of its own accord:—ſo much more ſo doth the ſoul part from its body, when maturated and come to its ſtrength and vigour.

3. It may greatly prevail upon the will and reſolution of a believer, to adventure boldly and cheerfully upon death, that our bodies, of which we are bereaved and deprived by death, ſhall be moſt certainly and advantageouſly reſtored to us by the reſurrection. The reſurrection of the dead is the encouragement and conſolation of the dying. The more our faith is eſtabliſhed in the doctrine of the reſurrection, the more we ſhall ſurmount the fears of diſſolution. If Paul urged it as an argument to reconcile Philemon to his ſervant Oneſimus, [v. 15.] That he therefore departed for a ſeaſon, that Philemon might receive him for ever; the ſame argument may reconcile every believer to death, and take off the prejudice of the ſoul againſt it.

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You ſhall ſurely receive your bodies again, and enjoy them for ever. Now the doctrine of the reſurrection is as ſure in itſelf, as it is comfortable to us; the depth and ſtrength of its foundation fully anſwers to the height and ſweetneſs of its conſolation; be pleaſed to try the two pillars thereof, and ſee which of them may be doubted or ſhaken, [Matt. xxii. 29.] 'You err (ſaith Chriſt to the Sadducees, 'who denied this doctrine) not knowing the ſcriptures 'and the power of God:'—this is the ground and root of their error, not knowing the ſcriptures and the power of God; q. d. did you know and believe the ſcriptures of God, and the power of God, you would never queſtion this doctrine of the reſurrection, which is built upon them both. The power of God convinceth all men that know and believe it, that it may be ſo, and the ſcriptures of God convince all that know and believe them, that it muſt be ſo. As for his power, who can doubt it? At the command and fiat of God the earth brought forth every living creature after his kind, [Gen. i. 24, 25.] at his command Lazarus came forth, [John xi. 43.] And was there not as much difficulty in either of theſe as in our reſurrection? By this power our ſouls were quickened and raiſed from the death of ſin and guilt, to the ſpiritual life of Chriſt, [Eph. i. 19.] And is it not as eaſy to raiſe a dead body as a dead ſoul? But what ſtand I arguing in ſo plain a caſe, when we are aſſured this mighty Power is able to ſubdue all things to itſelf? [Phil. iii. 21.] And then for his promiſe that it ſhall be ſo, what can be plainer? See I. Theſſ. iv. 15, 16. 'This we ſay unto 'you by the word of the Lord,' &c. (i. e.) in the name or authority of the Lord, and by commiſſion and warrant from him: he firſt opens his commiſſion, ſhews his credentials, and then publiſhes the comfortable doctrine of the reſurrection, and the ſaint's preheminence to all others therein. Well then, what remains in death to fright and ſcare a believer? Is it our parting with theſe bodies? Why, it is not for ever that we part with them: as ſure as the power and promiſes of God are true, firm, and ſufficient to accompliſh it, we ſhall ſee and en-

joy them again. This comforted Job, [ch. xix. 25, 26.] over all his diſeaſes, when of all his enjoyments that once he had, he could not ſay, My friends, my children, my eſtate; yet then he could ſay, My Redeemer. When he looked upon a poor, waſted, withered, loathſome body of his own, and ſaw nothing but a ſkeleton, an image of death; yet then could he ſee it a glorious body, by viewing it believingly in this glaſs of the reſurrection. So then all the damage we can receive by death, is but the abſence of our bodies for a time; during which time the covenant relation betwixt God and them holds good and firm, [Matt. xxii. 32.] He therefore will take care of them, and in due time reſtore them with marvellous improvements and endowments to us again, diveſted of all their infirmities, and cloathed with heavenly qualities and perfections, [I. Cor. xv. 43, 44.] And in the mean time the ſoul attains its reſt, and happineſs, and ſatisfaction in the bleſſed God.

4. The conſideration of what we part from, and what we go to, ſhould make the medium by which we paſs from ſo much evil to ſo great good, lovely, and deſirable in our eyes, how unpleaſing or bitter ſoever it be in itſelf. No man deſires phyſic for itſelf. There is no pleaſure in bitter pills and loathſome potions, except what riſes from the end, viz. the diſburdening of nature, and recovery of health; and this gives it a value with the ſick and pained. Under a like conſideration is death deſired by ſick and pained ſouls, who find it better to die once than groan under burdens continually. Death certainly is the beſt phyſician, next and under Jeſus Chriſt, that ever was employed about them; for it cures radically and perfectly, ſo that the ſoul never relapſes more into any diſtemper.—Other medicines are but anodynes, or at beſt they relieve us but in part, and for a time; but this goes through the work, and perfects the cure at once. Methinks that call of Chriſt which he gives his ſpouſe in Cant. iv. 8. 'Come with me from Lebanon, (my ſpouſe) with me 'from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the 'top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions dens, from

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'the mountains of leopards)' ſcarce ſuits any time ſo well as the time of death. Then it is that we depart from the lions dens, and the mountains of leopards, places uncomfortable and unſafe. More particularly at death the ſaints depart,

1. From defiling corruptions into perfect purity. No ſin hangs about the ſeparated, though it do about the ſanctified ſoul. They come out of the body ſuitable to that character and encomium, [Cant. iv. 7.] 'Thou art 'all fair, my love, there is no ſpot in thee.' It doth that for the ſaints which all their graces and duties, all their mercies and afflictions could never do. Faith is a great purifier, communion with God a great cleanſer, ſanctified afflictions a refiner's fire and fuller's ſoap; theſe have all done their parts, and been uſeful in their places; but none of them, nor all together, perfected this cure till death come; and then the work is done, and the cure perfected. All weeping, all praying, all believing, all hearing, all ſacraments, all the means and inſtruments in the world, cannot do what death will do for thee. One dying hour will do what ten thouſand praying hours never did, nor could do. In this hour the deſign of all thoſe hours is accompliſhed; as he that is dead by mortification is at preſent freed from ſin, in reſpect of imputation and dominion, [Rom. vi. 7.] ſo he that is juſtified and mortified when dead naturally, is immediately freed from the very indwelling and exiſtence of ſin in him. We read of the waſhing of the robes of the ſaints in Rev. vii. 14. The blood of the Lamb cleanſeth them from every ſpot, but it doth it gradually. The laſt ſpot of guilt indeed was fetched out by one act of juſtification, but the laſt ſpot of filth is not fetched out till the time of their diſſolution, when they are come out of the agonies of death (which the ſcripture calls great tribulation) then and not till then are they perfectly cleanſed. Sin brought in death, and death carries out ſin. O what a pure, lovely, ſhining creature is the ſeparated ſpirit of a juſt man! How clear is its judgement, how ordinate its will, how holy and altogether

together heavenly are all its affections now! And never till now it feels itſelf perfectly well and as it would be.

2. From heart-ſinking ſorrows into fullneſs of joy.—The life we now live is a groaning life, [II. Cor. v. 2.] Where is the Chriſtian, that if his inſide could be ſeen, and his heart laid naked, would not be found wounded from many hands; from the hand of God, of enemies, of friends, of Satan; but eſpecially by the hands of its own corruptions? Chriſt our head was ſtiled a Man of ſorrows, from the multitude of his ſorrows; and it is the lot of all his to be in a ſtate of ſorrow in the body. 'In 'the world (ſaith he) you ſhall have trouble.' When I conſider how oft the candle of ſorrow is held to the thread of life, I juſtly wonder how it is protracted to ſuch a length. What friend, what enjoyment, had we ever in this world, from which no ſorrow, nay, many ſorrows have not ſprung up to us? And if the beſt comforts bring forth ſorrows, what do the worſt things we meet with here bring forth? I ſuppoſe there are many thouſands of God's people this day in the world, that have as much reaſon to aſſume the ſame new name that Naomi did, and ſay, call me Marah. Look, as day and night divide all time betwixt them, ſo do our comforts and our ſorrows, only with this difference, that our nights of ſorrow, like winter-nights, are long, cold, and dark, and our days of comforts ſhort, and frequently over-caſt. But when we put off theſe bodies, we put off our mourning garments with them, and ſhall never ſorrow any more: thenceforth God wipes away all tears from his people's eyes, [Rev. xxi. 4.] and that is not all, but they enter into their Maſter's joy, even fulneſs of joy and pleaſures for evermore. Groans are turned into triumphs, and ſighs and tears into joyful acclamations and ſongs of praiſe. O that we were once made ſenſible thoroughly of the advantages that come by this exchange!.

3. From entangling temptations into everlaſting freedom. It is this body, and the intereſts and concerns of it, upon which Satan raiſes moſt of his batteries againſt our ſouls; it is our fleſh that cauſeth our ſoul to ſin;

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and whilſt the ſoul dwells in the body, it is within Satan's reach to tempt, and defile, and trouble it. O what grievous things do the beſt ſouls endure and ſuffer on this account! Temptations are of two ſorts, ordinary and mediate, by Satan's exciting and managing our corruptions, by preſenting objects to them; or extraordinary and immediate, like fiery darts ſhot immediately out of hell into the ſoul, which puts it all into a flame and combuſtion; of the former you read in Jam. i. 14. the latter in Eph. vi. 16. and upon the account of the one and the other the people of God are weary of their lives. Think what a grief it muſt be to a ſoul that loves God, to feel in itſelf ſuch things as militate againſt, and wound the name and honour of God, which is and ought to be dearer to it than its life. But by the door of death every gracious ſoul makes its eſcape from the tempting power of Satan; he can no more touch or affect the ſoul with any temptation, than we can batter the body of the ſun with ſnowballs; for as Satan can have no acceſs to that place of bleſſedneſs, where the ſouls of the ſaints are; ſo if he could, he can find nothing in them to faſten a temptation upon. The ſchoolmen give this as the reaſon why the ſaints in heaven are impeccable, becauſe all their thoughts and affections are everlaſtingly fixed in, and employed about the bleſſed God, whoſe face they continually behold in glory.

4. From diſtreſſing perſecutions into full and perfect reſt. As death ſets us free from the power of Satan, ſo from the reach of all perſecutors; 'There the wicked 'ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary are at reſt,' as it is in Job iii. 17. The price of one Ahab, who had ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs, was a ſtock ſufficient to purchaſe many years trouble to all Iſrael, [I. Kings xviii. 17.] 'Wicked men are as the unquiet troubled ſea, which 'cannot reſt,' [Iſa. lvii. 20.] They cannot reſt from troubling the ſaints, till they ceaſe to be wicked, or to live: when God puts out the candle of their lives, they are ſilent in darkneſs, [I. Sam. ii. 9.] And when God puts out the candle of our life, we are at reſt, though they

rage never ſo much in this world. Death is the ſaints *quietus eſt*, their full and final diſcharge from perſecuting enemies. When we are dying, we may ſay as Pſal. ix. 6. 'O thou enemy, deſtructions are come to a perpetual 'end.' God may put an end to theſe perſecutions before death, and ſuch a time, according to promiſe, is to be expected, 'When our officers ſhall be peace, and our exac-'tors righteouſneſs, [Iſa. lx. 17.] but if the accompliſhment of the promiſe be reſerved for ages to come, and we muſt ſpend our days under the oppreſſion of the wicked, yet this is our comfort, we know when we ſhall be far enough out of their reach.

5. From pinching wants to univerſal ſupplies. This is the day in which the Lord abundantly ſatisfies the deſires and ſupplies the needs of all his people. There are two ſorts of wants upon the people of God, ſpiritual and temporal. Spiritual wants are the juſt complaints of all gracious ſouls. You read, I. Theſſ. iii. 10. of that which is lacking in the faith of the ſaints. There are none but find many things lacking to the perfection of every grace. Our knowledge of God wants clearneſs and efficacy; our love to God, fervour and conſtancy; our faith wants ſtrength and ſtability: darkneſs mixes itſelf with our knowledge, deadneſs with our love, unbelief with the pureſt acts of faith. Go where you will, you ſhall find God's people every where complaining of their ſpiritual wants; one of a dark head, another of a dead heart, another of a treacherous memory. Thus they are loading one another with their complaints. Temporal outward wants pinch hard alſo upon many of God's people. The greateſt number of them conſiſt of the poor of this world, [James ii. 5.] Thoſe whoſe ſouls are diſcharged and acquitted by God, whoſe debts are paid by Jeſus Chriſt, may yet be entangled in a brake of cares and troubles in this world, and know not which way to turn themſelves in their ſtraits and difficulties. But by death the ſaints paſs from all their wants, inward and outward, to a ſtate of complete ſatisfaction, where nothing is lacking. From that day all their ſpiritual wants are ſupplied; for they are

now

now arrived to 'the meaſure of the ſtature of the fullneſs 'of Chriſt, to a perfect man,' [Eph. iv. 13.] 'Now 'that which is perfect is come, and all that was in part is 'done away,' [I. Cor. xiii. 10.] And for outward wants, they ſhall feel them no more; for putting off the body, we muſt needs put off all cares and concerns about it: 'Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, God 'ſhall deſtroy both it and them, [I. Cor. vi. 13.]

6. From diſtracting fears into higheſt ſecurity and reſt of thoughts for evermore. The fears of God's people are either about their ſouls, or about their bodies; the fears they have about their ſouls are inexpreſſible. Two things eſpecially exerciſe their fears about their ſouls. (1.) Whether they be really united to Chriſt. (2.) Whether they ſhall be able to continue and perſevere in the ways of Chriſt to the end; they are afraid of their ſincerity, and of their ſtability: and theſe fears accompany many of God's people from their regeneration to their diſſolution. O what would they not give, what would they not do, yea, what would they not endure, to get full ſatisfaction in thoſe things! Every working of corruption, every diſcovery made by temptation, puts them into a fright, and makes them queſtion all that ever was wrought in them.—And as their fears are great about the inward, ſo alſo about the outward man; eſpecially when ſuch bloody preparations ſeem to be making by the ſame enemies that have acted ſuch, and ſo many bloody tragedies already in the world. But at death they enter into a perfect peace and ſecurity, [Iſa. lvii. 2.] No wind of fear ſhall ever ruffle and diſturb their ſouls, and put them into a ſtorm any more.

7. From deluding ſhadows into ſubſtantial good. This world is the world of ſhadows and deluſive appearances. Here we are impoſed upon, and baffled by empty and deceitful vanities. All we have here is little elſe but a dream: at death the ſoul awakes out of its dreams, and finds itſelf in the world of realities, where it feeds upon ſubſtantial good to ſatisfaction, [Pſal. xvii. 15.] Now the advantages accruing to the ſoul by death, being ſo

great

great and many, though the medium be harſh and ungrateful in itſelf, yet there is all the reaſon in the world we ſhould covet it for the benefits that come by it.

V. The foretaſtes we have had of heaven already in the body, ſhould make all the ſaints long to be unbodied for the full and perfect fruition of that joy; ſeeing it cannot be fully and perfectly enjoyed by the ſoul, till it hath put off the body by death. That there are prelibations, firſt-fruits, and earneſts of future glory given at certain ſeaſons to believers in this life, is put beyond all doubting, not only by ſcripture-teſtimonies, but frequent experiences of God's people. I ſpeak not only with the ſcriptures, but with the clear experience of many ſaints: when I ſay there are to be felt and taſted, even here in the body, the earneſts of our inheritance, [Eph. i. 14.] 'The 'firſt-fruits of the ſpirit,' [Rom. viii. 23.] 'The ſealing 'of the ſpirit, [Eph. i. 13.] 'The very joy of the Lord,' [I. Pet. i. 8.] of the ſame kind, though in a remiſſer degree with that of the glorified. That the fullneſs of this joy cannot be in us whilſt we tabernacle in bodies of fleſh, is as plain. When Moſes deſired a ſight of that face which the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect do continually behold and adore, the anſwer was, 'No man can ſee my face and 'live,' [Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19, 20.] q. d. Moſes, thou aſkeſt a great thing, and underſtandeſt not how unable thou art to ſupport that which thou deſireſt: ſhould I ſhew thee my glory in this compounded ſtate thou now art, it would confound thee, and ſwallow thee up. Nature, as now conſtituted, cannot ſupport ſuch a weight of glory: a ray, a glimpſe of this light, overpowers man, and breaks ſuch a clay veſſel to pieces; which is the reaſon why the reſurrection muſt intervene betwixt this ſtate and that of the body's glorification. And it is not to be doubted, but one main end and reaſon why theſe foretaſtes of heaven are given us in the body, is to embolden the ſoul to venture through death itſelf for the full enjoyment of thoſe delights and pleaſures. They are like the grapes of Eſhcol to the faint-hearted Iſraelites, or the ſweet wines of Italy to the Gauls, which once taſted, made

made them reſtleſs till they had conquered that good country where they grew, [Rom. viii. 23.] 'We which have 'the firſt-fruits of the ſpirit, even we ourſelves do groan 'within ourſelves, waiting for the adoption, viz. the re-'demption of our bodies.'

Well then, reflect ſeriouſly upon thoſe ſweet taſtes that you have had of God and his love in your ſincere and ſecret addreſſes to him, and converſes with him. What a holy forgetfulneſs of all things in this world hath it wrought! How inſipid and taſteleſs hath it rendered the ſweeteſt creature-enjoyments! What willingneſs to be diſſolved for a more full fruition of it! God this way brings heaven nigh to your ſouls, out of deſign to overcome your reluctances at death, through which you paſs to the enjoyment of it. And after all thoſe ſights and taſtes, both of the truth and goodneſs of that ſtate, ſhall we ſtill reluctate, and hang back, as if we had never taſted how good the Lord is? O you may juſtly queſtion whether you ever had a real taſte of Jeſus Chriſt, if that taſte do not kindle coals of fire in your boſoms! I mean ardent longings to be with him, and to be ſatiated with his love. If you have been privileged with a taſte of that hidden manna, with the ſight of things inviſible, with joys unſpeakable and full of glory, and yet are loth to be gone to the Fountain whence all this flows; certainly, you herein croſs the deſign of the Spirit in giving them, and caſt a vile diſgrace and reproach upon the bleſſed God, as thinking there is more bitterneſs in death, than there is ſweetneſs in his preſence. Yea, it argues the ſtrength of that unbelief which ſtill remains in your hearts, that after ſo many taſtes and trials as you have had, you ſtill remain doubtful and heſitating about the certainty and reality of things inviſible. O what ado hath God with his froward and peeviſh children! If he had only revealed the future ſtate to us in his word, as the pure object of faith, and required us to die upon the mere credit of his promiſe, without ſuch pawns, pledges, and earneſts as theſe are, were there not reaſon enough for it? But after ſuch, and ſo many wonderful and amazing condeſcenſions, wherein he doth as it were ſay, Soul, if yet thou doubteſt,

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I will bring heaven to thee, thou ſhalt have it in thy own hand, thy eyes ſhall ſee it, thy hands ſhall handle it, thy mouth ſhall taſte it: how inexcuſable is our reluctancy?

VI. *It ſhould greatly fortify the people of God againſt the fears of diſſolution, to conſider that death can neither deſtroy the being of their ſouls by annihilation, nor the hopes and expectations they have of bleſſedneſs by diſappointment and fruſtration,* [Prov. xiv. 32.] 'The righteous hath hope in his death.' Though all earthly things fail at death (upon which account dying is expreſſed by failing, [Luke xvi. 19.] yet neither the ſoul, nor the well-grounded hopes can fail. The anchor of a believer's hope is firm and ſure, [Heb. vi. 18.] It will not come home in the greateſt ſtorm that can beat upon the ſoul. For, (1.) God hath foreknown and choſen them to ſalvation before the world was, [I. Pet. i. 2.] 'And this foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, 'having this ſeal, the Lord knoweth who are his,' [II. Tim. ii. 19.] His decrees are as firm as mountains of braſs, [Zech. vi. 1.] (2.) God hath juſtified their perſons, and therein deſtroyed the power of death over them, [I. Cor. xv. 55—57.] 'O death, where is thy ſting? O 'grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, 'the ſtrength of ſin is the law.' If all the hurtful power of death lies in ſin, and all the deſtructive power of ſin riſes from the law; then neither death nor ſin have any power to deſtroy the believer, in whom the righteouſneſs of the law is fulfilled, [Rom. viii. 4.] namely, by the imputation of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt to them, in reſpect of which they are as righteous, as if in their own perſons they had perfectly obeyed all its commands, or ſuffered all its penalties. Thus death loſes its ſting, its curſe, and killing power over the ſouls of all that are in Chriſt. (3.) God hath ſanctified their natures, which which ſanctification is not only a ſure evidence of their election and juſtification, [II. Theſſ. i. 5, 6.—Rom. viii. 1.] but a ſure pledge of their glorification alſo, [II. Cor. v. 4, 5.] Yea, (4.) He hath made a ſure and an everlaſting covenant with believers, and among other gracious privileges thereby conferred upon them, Death is found

in the inventory, [I. Cor. xiii. 21.] Death is yours; to die is gain to them; it deſtroys their enemies, and the diſtance that is betwixt Chriſt and them. (5.) He hath ſealed them to his glory by the holy Spirit, [Eph. iv. 30.] So that their hopes are too firmly built to be deſtroyed by death; and if it cannot deſtroy their ſouls, nor overthrow their hopes, they need not fear all that it can do beſides.

7. *It may greatly encourage and embolden the people of God to die, conſidering, that though at death they take the laſt ſight and view of all that is dear to them on earth, yet then they are admitted to the firſt immediate ſight and bleſſed viſion of God, which will be their happineſs to all eternity.* When Hezekiah was upon his ſuppoſed death-bed, he complained, [Iſa. xxxviii. 11.] 'I ſhall ſee man no more with 'the inhabitants of the world.' We ſhall ſee thenceforth theſe corporeal people no more; we ſhall ſee our habitations and dwelling places no more, [Job vii. 9—11.] We ſhall ſee our children and dear relations no more, [Job xiv. 21.] 'His ſons come to honour, and he know-'eth it not.' Theſe things make death terrible to men; but that which cures all this trouble is, that we ſhall neither need nor deſire them, being thenceforth admitted to the beatifical viſion of the bleſſed God himſelf. It is the expectation and hope of this which comforteth the ſouls of the righteous here, [Pſal. xvii. 15.] 'When I awake, I ſhall 'behold thy face in righteouſneſs. Thoſe weak and dim repreſentations made by faith at a diſtance, are the very joy and rejoicing of a believer's ſoul now, [I. Pet. i. 7, 8.] but how ſweet and tranſporting ſoever theſe viſions of faith be, they are not worthy to be named in compariſon with the immediate and beatifical viſion, [I. Cor. xiii. 12.] This is the very ſum of a believer's bleſſedneſs; and what it is, we cannot comprehend in this imperfect ſtate; only in general we may gather theſe concluſions about it, from the account given of it in the ſcriptures.

1. That it will not be ſuch a ſight of God as we now have by the mediation of faith, but a direct, immediate, and intuitive viſion of God, [I. John iii. 2.] 'We ſhall

'ſee him as he is; [I. Cor. xiii. 12.] 'Then face to 'face:' which far tranſcends the viſion of faith in clearneſs and in comfort; this ſeems to import no leſs than the very ſight of the Divine eſſence, that which Moſes deſired on earth to ſee, but could not, Exod. xxxiii. 20. nor can be ſeen by any man dwelling in a body, I. Tim. vi. 16. nor by unbodied ſouls comprehenſively; ſo God only ſees himſelf; our eyes ſee the ſun, which they cannot comprehend, yet truly apprehend. God will then be known in his eſſence, and in the glory of all his attributes; this ſight of the attributes of God gives the occaſion and matter of thoſe aſcriptions of praiſe and glory to him, which is the proper employment of glorified ſouls, [Rev. iv. 11. and v. 12, 13.] which is the proper employment of angels, [Iſa. vi. 3.] O how different is this from what we now have through faith, duties, and ordinance? See the difference betwixt knowledge by reports and immediate ſight, in that example of the 'queen of the ſouth,' I. Kings x. 5. The former only excited her deſires, the latter tranſported and wrapt her very ſoul. Some may think ſuch a viſion of God to exceed the abilities of nature and capacity of any creature; but, as a learned man rightly obſerves, if the Divine nature be capable of union with a creature, as it is evident it is in the perſon of Chriſt, it is alſo capable of being the object of viſion to the creature; beſide, we muſt know the light of glory hath the ſame reſpect to this bleſſed viſion, that aſſiſting grace hath to the acts of faith and obedience performed here on earth. It is a comforting ſoul ſtrengthening light, not to dazzle and overpower, but comfort, ſtrengthen, and clear the eye of the creature's underſtanding, [Rev. ii. 28.] 'I will give him the morning ſtar, Lumen confortans; and Pſal. xxxvi. 9. 'in thy light we ſhall ſee light.'

2. It will be a ſatisfying ſight, [Pſal. xvii. 15.] ſo perfectly quieting and giving reſt to the ſoul in all its powers, that they neither can proceed, nor deſire to proceed any farther, the underſtanding can know no more, the will can will no more, the affections of joy, delight, and love are at full reſt and quiet in their proper center. For all good is in

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the chiefeſt good eminently; as all the light of the candles in the world is in the ſun, and all the rivers in the world in the ſea. That which makes the underſtanding, will, and affections move farther, as being reſtleſs and unſatisfied in all diſcoveries and enjoyments here, is the limited and imperfect nature of things we now converſe with; and if you bring a great ſhip that draws much water into a narrow and ſhallow river, ſhe can neither ſail nor ſwim, but is preſently aground; but let that ſhip have ſea room enough, then ſhe can turn and ſail before the wind, becauſe there is depth of water, and room enough: ſo it is here, all that delighted, but could never ſatisfy you in the creature, is eminently in God. And what was imperfectly in them, is perfectly to be enjoyed in him, [I. Cor. xv. 28.] 'God ſhall be all in all;' the comforts you had here were but drop by drop, inflaming, not ſatisfying the appetite of the ſoul; but then 'the Lamb which is in the 'midſt of the throne ſhall feed them, and lead them unto 'fountains of living waters,' [Rev. vii. 17.] The object fills the faculties.

3. It will be an appropriating viſion of God, you ſhall ſee him as your own God and proper portion; elſe it could never be a ſatisfying viſion, [Job xix. 27.] 'Whom 'I ſhall ſee for myſelf.' Not look on him as another's God, but as my God and portion for ever. Balaam ſaw Chriſt by a ſpirit of prophecy; but he had no comfort, becauſe no intereſt in him, [Num. xxiv. 17.] The wicked ſhall ſee him, but without joy, yea, with weeping eyes, and gnaſhing of teeth, becauſe they cannot ſee him as their Lord, [Luke xiii. 28.] It is but a poor comfort to ſtarving beggars to ſtand quivering and famiſhing in the ſtreets in a cold dark night, and ſee the lights in the bridegroom's houſe, the noble diſhes ſerved in, and to hear the muſick and mirth of the gueſts that feaſt within. Here it will be as clear that he is our God, as that he is God. Aſſurance is that which many ſouls have deſired, prayed, and panted for, but cannot attain. There be many rubs and ſtumbling blocks in the way to that ſweet enjoyment; but here we find what we have been ſo long ſeeking; there be

no doubts, ſcruples, objections, puzzling caſes to exerciſe your own and others thoughts. But as theſe did ariſe from one of theſe grounds, viz. the working of corruption, the efficacy of temptation, or divine withdrawments, and the hidings of God's face; ſo all theſe being removed perfectly and for ever in that ſtate, the heavens muſt needs be clear, and not a cloud of doubt or fear to be ſeen for ever.

4. It will be a deeply affecting ſight, your eyes will now ſo affect your hearts as they were never affected before. The firſt view of God will ſnatch away your hearts to him, as a greater flame doth the leſs. Love will not now diſtil from the heart as waters from a cold ſtill, but guſh out as from a ſluice or flood gate pulled up. The ſoul will not move after God ſo deadly and ſlow as it doth now, but be as the chariots of Aminadab, [Cant. vi. 12.] We may ſay of the frames of our hearts there, compared with what they are here, as it is ſaid Deut. xii. 8, 9. You ſhall not love or delight in God as you do this day. If the perfection of that ſtate would admit ſhame or ſorrow, how ſhould we bluſh and mourn in heaven to think how cold our love, and low our delights in God were on earth [1. John iv. 16.] 'God is love, and he that dwelleth in 'love, dwelleth in God.' Look, as iron put into the fire becomes all fiery, ſo the ſoul dwelling in the God of love, becomes all love, all delight, all joy. O what tranſports muſt that ſoul feel that abides under the line of love! feels the perpendicular beams of electing, creating, redeeming, preſerving love beating powerfully upon it, and melting it into love! ſee ſome of their tranſports, [Rev. iv. 13, 14.]

5. It will be an everlaſting viſion of God. [I. Theſſ. iv. 17.] 'So ſhall we be ever with the Lord, (ever with the Lord) who can find words to open the deep ſenſe of theſe few words? *Vacabimus & videbimus, videbimus & amabimus, amabimus & laudabimus in fine ſine fine*, ſaid bleſſed Auſtin: this is the everlaſting ſabbath which hath no night, [Rev. xiii. 4, 5.] The eternal happineſs purchaſed for the ſaints by the invaluable blood of Chriſt. If one hour's enjoyment of God in the way of faith be ſo ſweet, and no price can be put upon it, nothing on earth taken in exchange for it;

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what muſt a whole eternity in the immediate and full viſions of that bleſſed face in heaven be! Well then, if ſuch ſights as theſe immediately ſucceed the ſight you have on earth, either by ſenſe of things natural, or by reaſon of things intellectual, or by faith of things ſpiritual; who that believes the truth, and expects the fulfilling of ſuch promiſes as theſe, would not be willing to have his eyes cloſed by death, as ſoon as God ſhall pleaſe? I have read of a holy man that had ſweet communion with God in prayer, who in the cloſe of his duty cried out, *Claudimini oculi mei, claudimini, &c.* Be ſhut, O my eyes, be ſhut, you ſhall never ſee any thing on earth like that I have now ſeen. Ah! little do the friends of dead believers think what viſions of God, what raviſhing ſights of Chriſt, the ſouls of their friends have, when they are cloſing their eyes with tears.

VIII. *The conſideration of the evil days that are to come ſhould make the people of God willing to accept of a hiding place in the grave, as a ſpecial favour from God.* It is accounted an act of favour by God, [Iſa. lvii. 1, 2.] to be taken away from the evil to come. There are two kinds of evils to come, the evil of ſin, and the evil of ſufferings. Sin to come are terrible to gracious hearts, when temptations ſhall be at their height and ſtrength. O what warping and ſhrinking, what diſſembling, yea, downright denying the known truths and ways of God, may you ſee every where! Many conſciences will then be wounded and waſted.—Many ſcandals and rocks of offence will be rolled into the way of godlineſs. Chriſt will be expoſed and put to open ſhame. Should we only be ſpectators of ſuch tragedies as theſe, it were enough to overwhelm a gracious and tender heart; but what upright heart is there without fears and jealouſies of being brought under the guilt of theſe evils in itſelf, as well as the ſhame and grief for them in others? O it were a thouſand times better for you to die in the purity and integrity of your conſciences, than to protract a miſerable life without them! O think what a world it is that you are like to leave behind you in reſpect of ſin to come. And as there are many evils of ſin to

come,

come, ſo there are many evils of ſufferings coming on; the days of viſitation are come, the days of recompence are come, and 'Iſrael ſhall know it,' [Hoſ. ix. 7.] All the ſufferings you have yet met with have been in books and hiſtories; you never yet ſaw the martyrdom of the ſaints but in the pictures and ſtories: but you will find it quite another thing, to be the ſubjects of theſe cruelties, than to be the mere readers or relators of them. It is one thing to ſee the painted lion on a ſign-poſt, and another to meet the living lion roaring upon you. Ah! little do we imagine how the hearts of men are convulſed; what fears, what faintings invade their ſpirits, when they are to meet the King of Terrors in the frightful formalities of a violent death. The conſideration of theſe things will diſcover to you the reaſon of that ſtrange wiſh of Job, [chap. xiv. 13.] 'O that thou wouldſt hide me in the grave; that 'thou wouldſt keep me in ſecret till thy wrath be paſt!' And it deſerves a ſerious thought, that when the Holy Ghoſt had, in Rev. xiv. 9—12. deſcribed the miſerable plight of thoſe poor ſouls, who being overcome by their own fears, and the love of this world, ſhould plunge themſelves firſt into a deep guilt, by compliance with Antichriſt, and receiving his mark, then into a hell upon earth, the remorſe and horror of their own conſciences, which gives them no reſt day nor night; he immediately ſubjoins, [ver. 13.] 'Bleſſed are the dead that die in the 'Lord, yea, from henceforth, ſaith the Spirit,' &c. O it is a ſpecial bleſſing and favour to be laid out of the way 'of thoſe temptations and torments in a ſeaſonable 'and quiet grave.'

IX. *Your fixed averſation and unwillingneſs to die will provoke God to imbitter your lives with much more affliction than you have yet felt, or would feel, if your hearts were more mortified and weaned in this point.* You cannot think of your own deaths with pleaſure, no, nor yet with patience. Well, take heed leſt this draw down ſuch troubles upon you, as ſhall make you at laſt to ſay with Job, [chap. x. 1.] 'My ſoul is weary of my life;' an expreſſion much like

like that II. Sam. i. 9. 'Anguiſh is come upon me, be-
'cauſe my life is whole in me.' My ſoul is hardened, or become cruel againſt my life, as the Chaldee renders it.—There is a twofold wearineſs of life; one from excellency of ſpirit, a noble principle, the ardent love of Jeſus Chriſt, [Phil. i. 23.] 'I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be 'with Chriſt;' another from the mere preſſures of affliction and anguiſh of ſpirit, under heavy and ſucceſſive ſtrokes from the hand of God and men. Is it not more excellent and deſirable to groan for death under a preſſure of love to Chriſt, than of afflictions from Chriſt? I am convinced that very many of our afflictions come upon this ſcore and account, to make us willing to die. Is it not ſad that God is forced to bring death upon all our comfortable and deſirable things in this world, before he can gain our conſents to be gone? Why will you put God upon ſuch work as this? Why cannot he have your hearts at a cheaper rate? If you could die, many of your comforts, for ought I know, might live. Had Joab come to Abſalom when he ſent for him the firſt or ſecond time, Abſalom had never ſet his field of barley on fire, [II. Sam. xiv. 30.] And were you more obedient to the will of God in this matter, it is likely he would not conſume your health, and eſtates, and relations, with ſuch heavy ſtrokes as he hath done, and will yet farther do, except your wills be more compliant. Alas! to cut off your comforts one after another, and make you live a groaning life, the Lord hath no pleaſure in it; but he had rather you ſhould loſe theſe things, than that he ſhould loſe your hearts on earth, or company in heaven: *Impatiens ægrotus crudelem facit medicum.*

X. *The decree of death cannot be reverſed, nor is there any other ordinary paſſage for the ſoul into glory, but through the gates of death.* [Heb. ix. 27.] *It is appointed for all men once to die, but after that the judgement.* There is but one way to paſs out of the obſcure ſuffocating life in the womb, into the more free and nobler life in the world, viz. through the throes and agonies of birth: and there is ordinarily but one way to paſs from this ſinning, groaning life we

live in this world, to the enjoyment of God and the glory above, viz. through the agonies of death. You muſt caſt, as it were, your ſecundine once again, I mean this vile body, before you can be happy. Heaven cannot come down to you, you cannot ſee God and live, [Exod. xxxiii. 20.] It would certainly confound and break you to pieces like an earthen pitcher, ſhould God but ray forth his glory upon you in the ſtate you now are; and it is ſure you cannot expect the extraordinary favour of ſuch a tranſlation as Enoch had, [Heb. xi. 5.] or as thoſe believers ſhall have that ſhall be found alive at Chriſt's coming, [I. Theſſ. iv. 17.] You muſt go the common road that all the ſaints go; but though you cannot avoid, you may ſweeten it. God will not reverſe his decree, but you may, and ought to arm yourſelves againſt the fears of it. Ahaſuerus would not recal the proclamation he had emitted againſt the Jews, but he gave them full liberty to take up arms to defend themſelves againſt their enemies.—It is much ſo here, the ſentence cannot be revoked; but yet it gives you leave, yea, he commands you to arm yourſelves againſt death, and defy it, and trample it under the feet of faith.

XI. *When you find your hearts reluctate at the thoughts of leaving the body, and the comforts of this world, then conſider how willingly and cheerfully Jeſus Chriſt left heaven, and the boſom of his Father, to come down to this world for your ſakes,* [Prov. viii. 30, 31.—Pſal. xl. 7.] 'Lo, I come,' &c. O compare the frames of your hearts with his in this point, and ſhame yourſelves out of ſo unbecoming a temper of ſpirit. (1.) He left heaven, and all the delights and glory of it, to come down to this world, to be abaſed and humbled to the loweſt; you leave this world of ſin and miſery to aſcend to heaven, to be exalted to the higheſt. He came hither to be impoveriſhed, you go thither to be enriched, [II. Cor. viii. 9.] yet he came willingly, and we go grudgingly. (2.) He came from heaven to earth to be made ſin for us, [II. Cor. v. 21.] we go from earth to heaven to be fully and everlaſtingly delivered from ſin; yet he came more willingly to bear our ſins, than we go

to

to be delivered from them. (3.) He came to take a body of fleſh to ſuffer and die in, [Heb. ii. 24.] you leave your bodies that you may never ſuffer in or by them any more. (4.) As his incarnation was a deep abaſement, ſo his death was the moſt bitter death that ever was taſted by any from the beginning, or ever ſhall be to the end of the world; and yet how obediently doth he ſubmit to both at the Father's call, [Luke xii. 50.] 'I have a baptiſm to 'be baptiſed with, and how am I ſtraitened till it be ac-'compliſhed!' Ah, Chriſtians, your death cannot have the ten thouſandth part of that bitterneſs in it that Chriſt's had. I remember one of the martyrs being aſked, why his heart was ſo light at death? returned this anſwer, Becauſe Chriſt's heart was ſo heavy at his death. O there is a vaſt difference between the one and the other; the wrath of God, and curſe of the law, were in his death, [Gal. iii. 13.] but there is neither wrath nor curſe in your death, who die in the Lord, [Rom. viii. 1.] God forſook him when he hanged upon the tree in the agonies of heart; [Matt. xxvii. 46.] 'My God, my God, why haſt 'thou forſaken me?' But you ſhall not be forſaken; he will make all your beds in ſickneſs, [Pſal. xli. 3.] He will never leave you, nor forſake you, [Heb. xiii. 5.] Yet he regretted not, but went as a ſheep or a lamb, [Iſa. liii. 7.] O reaſon yourſelves out of this reluctancy at death by this great example and pattern of obedience!

XII. *Laſtly, let no Chriſtian be affrighted at death, conſidering that the death of Chriſt is the death of deaths, and hath utterly diſarmed it of all its deſtructive power.* If you tremble when you look upon death, yet you cannot but triumph when you look believingly upon Chriſt. For, (1.) Chriſt died (O believer) for thy ſins, [Rom. iv. 25.] his death was an expiatory ſacrifice for all thy guilt, [Gal. iii. 13.] ſo that thou ſhalt not die in thy ſins: the pangs of death may and muſt be on thy outward man, but the guilt of ſin, and the condemnation of God, ſhall not be upon thy inner man. (2.) The death of Chriſt in thy room hath utterly deſtroyed the power of death, which once was in the hand of Satan, [Heb. ii. 14.—Col. ii. 14, 15.] his

power was not authoritative, but executive: not as the power of a king, but of a ſheriff, which is none at all, when a pardon is produced. (3.) Chriſt hath aſſured us, that his victory over death ſhall be complete in our perſons. It is already a complete perſonal victory, in reſpect of himſelf, [Rom. vi. 9.] he dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. It is an incomplete victory already as to our perſons. It can diſſolve the union of our ſouls and bodies, but the union betwixt Chriſt and our ſouls it can never diſſolve, [Rom. viii. 38, 39.] and as for the power it ſtill retains over our duſt, that alſo ſhall be deſtroyed at the reſurrection, [I. Cor. xv. 25, 26. compared with ver. 54—57.] ſo that there is no cauſe for any ſoul in Chriſt to tremble at the thoughts of a ſeparation from the body, but rather to embrace it as a privilege; 'Death is our's.' O that theſe arguments might prevail! O that they might at laſt win the conſent of our hearts to go along with death, which is the meſſenger ſent by God to bring us home to our Father's houſe. But I doubt when all is ſaid we are where we were; all this ſuffices not to overcome the regrets and reluctancies of nature; ſtill the matter ſticks in our minds, and we cannot conquer our diſinclined wills in this matter. What is the matter? Where lie the rubs and hiindrances? O that God would remove them at laſt!

Object. 1. *This is a common plea with many, I am not ready, and fit to die; were I ready, I ſhould be willing to be gone.—Sol.* (1.) How long ſoever you live in the body, there will be ſomewhat ſtill out of order, ſomething ſtill to do; for you muſt be in a ſtate of imperfection whilſt you remain here, and according to this plea you will never be willing to die. (2.) Your willingneſs to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, is one ſpecial part of your fitneſs for death; and till you attain it in ſome good meaſure, you are not ſo fit to die as you ſhould be. (3.) If you be in Chriſt, you have a fundamental fitneſs for death, though you may want ſome circumſtantial preparatives. And as to all that is wanting in your ſanctification or obedience now, it will be completed in a moment upon your diſſolution.

Object.

Object. 2. *Others plead the desire they have to live, is in order to God's further service by them in this world. O, say they, it was David's happiness to die when he had served his generation according to the will of God,* [Acts xiii. 36.] *If we had done so too, we should say with Simeon, Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.*—*Sol.* (1.) God needs not your hands to carry on his service in the world; he can do it by other hands when you are gone. Many of greater gifts and graces than you are daily laid in the grave to teach you: God needs no man's help to carry on his work. (2.) If the service of God be so dear to you, there is higher and more excellent service for you in heaven, than any you ever were, or can be employed in here on earth. O why do not you long to be amidst the thick of angels and spirits made perfect in the temple-service in heaven!

Object. 3. *O, but my relations in the world lie near my heart; what will become of them when I am gone?*—*Sol.* (1.) It is pity they should lie nearer your hearts than Jesus Christ; if they do, you have little reason to desire death indeed. (2.) Who took care of you when death snatched your dear relations from you, who possibly felt the same workings of heart that you now do? Did you not experience the truth of that word, [Psal. xxvii. 10.] 'When 'father and mother forsake me, then the Lord taketh me 'up:' And if you be in the covenant, God hath prevented this plea with his promise, [Jer. xlix. 11.] 'Leave 'thy fatherless children to me, I will keep them alive, and 'let their widows trust in me.'

Object. 4. *But I desire to live to see the felicity of Zion before I go hence, and the answer of the many prayers I have sworn for it; I am loth to leave the people of God in so sad a condition.*—*Sol.* The publicness of thy spirit and love to Zion is doubtless pleasing to God; but it is better for you to be in heaven one day, than to live over again all the days you have lived on earth in the best times that ever the church of God enjoyed in this world: the promises shall be accomplished, though you may not live to see their accomplishment; die you in the faith of it, as Joseph did, [Gen. l. 24.] But alas! the matter doth not stick

here: this is not the main hindrance; I will tell you where I think it lies: (1.) In the hesitancy and staggering of our faith about the certainty and reality of things invisible. (2.) In some special guilt upon the conscience which appals us. (3.) In a negligent and careless course of life, which is not ordinarily blessed with much evidence or comfort. (4.) In the deep engagements of our hearts to earthly things: they could not be so cold to Christ, if they were not overheated with other things.—Till these distempers be cured, no arguments can prosper that are spent to this end. The Lord dissolve all those ties betwixt us and this world, which hinder our consent and willingness to be dissolved and to be with Christ, which is far better. And now we have had a glance, a glimmering light, a faint umbrage of the state of separated souls of the just in heaven; it remains that I shew you somewhat of the state and case of damned souls in hell. A dreadful representation it is, but it is necessary we hear of hell, that we may not feel it.

I. Pet. iii. 19.

By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.

In the former discourse we have had a view of heaven, and of the spirits of just men made perfect, the inhabitants of that blessed region of light and glory. In this scripture we have the contrary glass, representing the unspeakable misery of those souls or spirits which are separated by death from their bodies for a time, and by sin from God for ever: arrested by the law, and secured in the prison of hell, unto the judgement of the great day. A sermon of hell may keep some souls out of hell, and a sermon of heaven be the means to help others to heaven. The

deſire of my heart is, that the converſations of all thoſe who ſhall read theſe diſcourſes of heaven and hell, might look more like a diligent flight from the one, and purſuit of the other. The ſcope of the context is a perſuaſive to patience upon a proſpect of manifold tribulations coming upon the Chriſtian churches, ſtrongly enforced by Chriſt's example, who both in his own perſon, ver. 18. and by his ſpirit in his ſervants, ver. 19. exerciſed wonderful patience and long-ſuffering as a pattern to his people. This 19th verſe gives us an account of his long-ſuffering towards that diſobedient generation of ſinners, on whom he waited 120 years in the miniſtry of Noah. There are difficulties in the text. Eſtius reckons no leſs than ten expoſitions of it, and ſaith, it is a very difficult ſcripture in the judgement of almoſt all interpreters.—But yet I muſt ſay thoſe difficulties are rather brought to it, than found in it. It is a text which hath been racked and tortured by Popiſh expoſitors to make it ſpeak Chriſt's local deſcent into hell, and to confeſs their doctrine of purgatory; things which it knew not.

But if we will take its genuine ſenſe, it only relates the ſin and miſery of thoſe contumacious perſons on whom the Spirit of God waited ſo long in the miniſtry of Noah, giving an account of, 1. Their ſin on earth, which is both ſpecified and aggravated. (1.) Specified; namely, their diſobedience: they were ſometimes diſobedient or unperſuadable; neither precepts nor examples could bring them to repentance. (2.) This their diſobedience is aggravated by the expence of God's patience upon them for the ſpace of a hundred and twenty years, not only forbearing them ſo long, but ſtriving with them, as Moſes expreſſeth it; or waiting on them, as the apoſtle here: but all to no purpoſe, they were obſtinate, ſtubborn, and unperſuadable to the very laſt. 2. Behold, therefore, in the next place the dreadful, but moſt juſt and equal puniſhment of theſe ſinners in hell; they are called 'ſpirits in 'priſon,' i. e. ſouls now in hell. At that time when Peter wrote of them they were not entire men, but ſpirits in the proper ſenſe, i. e. ſeparated ſouls, bodileſs and lone-

ly ſouls: whilſt in the body it is properly a ſoul, but when ſeparated, a ſpirit, according to ſcripture language, and the ſtrict notions of ſuch a being, [Pſal. xxxi. 6.—Eccleſ. xii. 7.—Acts vii. 50.] Theſe ſpirits or ſouls in the ſtate of ſeparation are ſaid to be in a priſon, that is, in hell, as the word elſewhere notes, [Rev. xx. 7. and Jude v. 6. comp.] Heaven and hell are the only receptacles of departed or ſeparated ſouls. Thus you have in a few words the natural and general ſenſe of the place, and it is but a waſte of time to repeat and refel the many falſe and forced interpretations of this text, which corrupt minds and mercenary pens have perplexed and darkened it withal. That which I level at is comprized in this plain propoſition.

Doct. *That the ſouls or ſpirits of all men who die in a ſtate of unbelief and diſobedience, are immediately committed to the priſon of hell, there to ſuffer the wrath of God due to their ſins.*

Hell is ſhadowed forth to us in ſcripture by divers metaphors; for we cannot conceive ſpiritual things unleſs they be ſo cloathed and ſhadowed out unto us. Auguſtine gives this reaſon for the frequent uſe of metaphors and allegories in ſcripture, becauſe they are ſo much proportioned to our ſenſes, with which our ſenſes have contracted an intimacy and familiarity; and therefore God, to accommodate his truth to our capacity, doth, as it were, this way embody it in earthly expreſſions, according to that celebrated obſervation of the Cabaliſts; *Lumen ſupremum nunquam deſcendit ſine indumento*: the pure and ſupreme light never deſcends to us without a garment or covering. In the Old Teſtament the place and ſtate of damned ſouls is ſet forth by metaphors taken from the moſt remarkable places and exemplary acts of vengeance upon ſinners in this world; as the overthrow of the giants by the flood, thoſe prodigious ſinners, that fought againſt heaven, and were ſwept by the flood into the place of torments. To this Solomon is conceived to allude in Prov. xxi. 16. 'The man that wanders out of 'the way of underſtanding, ſhall remain in the congre-'gation of the dead.' In the Hebrew it is, he ſhall remain with

with the Rephaims or giants. These giants were the men that more especially provoked God to bring the flood upon the world; they are also noted as the first inhabitants of hell, therefore from them the place of torments takes its name, and the damned are said to remain in the place of giants.

Sometimes hell is called Tophet, [Isa. xxx. 33.] This Tophet was in the valley of Hinnom, and was famous for divers things; there the children of Israel caused their children to pass through the fire to Moloch, or sacrificed them to the devil; drowning their horrible shrieks and ejulations with the noise of drums. In this valley also was the memorable slaughter of eighteen hundred thousand of the Assyrian camp by an angel in one night. There also the Babylonians murdered the people of Jerusalem at the taking of the city, [Jer. vii. 31, 32.] So that Tophet was a mere shambles, the public chopping-block on which the limbs both of young and old were quartered out by thousands; it was filled with dead bodies till there was no place for burial. By all which it appears, that no spot of ground in the world was so famous for the fires kindled in it to destroy men, for the doleful cries that echoed from it, or the innumerable multitudes that perished in it; for which reason it is made the emblem of hell; sometimes it is called a 'lake of fire burning with brimstone,' [Rev. xix. 20.] denoting the most exquisite torment by an intense and durable flame.

And in the text it is called a prison, where the spirits of ungodly men are both detained and punished. This notion of a prison gives us a lively representation of the miserable state of damned souls, and that especially in the following particulars: 1. Prisoners are arrested and seized by authority of law; it is the law which sends them thither, and keeps them there. The mittimus of a justice is but the instrument of the law, whereby they are deprived of liberty, and taken into custody. The law of God which sinners have both violated and despised, at death takes hold of them, and arrests them. It is the law which claps up their spirits in prison, and in the

name

name and authority of the great and terrible God commits them to hell. All that are out of Chriſt are under the curſe and damning ſentence of the law, which now comes to be executed on them, [Gal. iii. 10.] 2. Priſoners are carried or haled to priſon by force and conſtraint. Natural force backs legal authority. The law is executed by rough and reſolute bailiffs, who compel them to go, though never ſo much againſt their will. This alſo is the caſe of the wicked at death. Satan is God's bailiff, to hurry away the law-condemned ſoul to the infernal priſon. The devil hath the power of death, [Heb. ii. 14.] as the executioner hath of the body of a condemned man. 3. Priſoners are chained and bolted in priſon to prevent their eſcape; ſo are damned ſpirits ſecured by the power of God, and chained by their own guilty and trembling conſciences in hell unto the time of judgement, and fulneſs of miſery; not that they have no torment in the mean time. Alas! were there no more but that fearful expectation of wrath and fiery indignation, ſpoken of by the apoſtle, [Heb. x. 27.] it were an inexpreſſible torment; but there is a further degree of torment to be awarded them at the judgement of the great day, to which they are therefore kept as in chains and priſons. 4. Priſons are dark and noiſome places; not built for pleaſure, as other houſes are, but for puniſhment; ſo is hell, [Jude v. 6.] 'Reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs,' as he there deſcribes the place of torments, yea, utter darkneſs, [Matt. viii. 12.] extreme or perfect darkneſs. Philoſophers tell us of the darkneſs of this world, *nan dantur puræ tenebræ*, that there is no pure or perfect darkneſs here without ſome mixture of light; but there is not a glade of light, not a ſpark of hope or comfort ſhining into that priſon. 5. Mournful ſighs and groans are heard in priſons, [Pſal. xcvii. 11.] 'Let the ſighing of the priſoners come before thee,' ſaith the Pſalmiſt. But deeper ſighs and emphatical groans are heard in hell. 'There ſhall be weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth,' [Matt. viii. 12.] Thoſe that could not groan under the ſenſe of ſin on earth, ſhall howl under anguiſh

guiſh and deſperation in hell. 6. There is a time when priſoners are brought out of the priſon to be judged, and then return in a worſe condition than before to the place from whence they came. God alſo hath appointed a day for the ſolemn condemnation of thoſe ſpirits in priſon. The ſcriptures call it the judgement of the great day, [Jude v. 6.] from the great buſineſs that is to be done therein, and the great and ſolemn aſſembly that ſhall then appear before God.

But I will inſiſt no longer upon the diſplay of the metaphor. My buſineſs is to give you a repreſentation of the ſtate and condition of damned ſouls in hell, and to aſſiſt your conceptions of them, and of their ſtate. It is a dreadful ſight I am to give you this day; but how much better is it to ſee than to feel that wrath? The treaſures thereof ſhall ſhortly be broken up, and poured forth upon ſpirits of men. You had in the former diſcourſe a faint umbrage of the ſpirits of juſt men in glory; in this you will have an imperfect repreſentation of the ſpirits of wicked men in hell; and look, as the former cannot be adequate and perfect, becauſe that happineſs paſſeth our knowledge; ſo neither can this be ſo, becauſe the miſery of the damned paſſeth our fear. The caſe and ſtate of a damned ſpirit will be beſt opened in theſe following propoſitions:

Prop. I. *That the guilt of all ſin gathers to, and ſettles in the conſcience of every Chriſtleſs ſinner, and makes up a vaſt treaſure of guilt in the courſe of his life in this world.*

The high and awful power of conſcience belonging to the underſtanding faculty in the ſoul of man, was ſpoken to before, as to its general nature. And that conſcience certainly accompanies it, and is inſeparable from it, was there ſhewed. I am here to conſider it as the ſeat or center of guilt in all unregenerate and loſt ſouls. For look, as the tides waſh up, and leave the ſlime and filth upon the ſhore, even ſo all the corruption and ſin that is in the other faculties of the ſoul, ſettles upon the conſcience. 'Their mind and conſcience (ſaith the apoſtle) is defiled,' [Tit. i. 15.] it is as it were the ſink of

a ſinner's ſoul, into which all filth runs, and guilt ſettles. The conſcience of every believer is purged from its filthineſs by the blood of Chriſt, [Heb. ix. 14.] his blood and his ſpirit purify it and pacify it, whereby it becomes the region of light and peace; but all the guilt which hath been long contracting through the life of an unbeliever, fixes itſelf deep and faſt in his conſcience; 'It is written 'upon the tables of their hearts as with a pen of iron,' [Jer. xvii. 1.] (i. e.) guilt is as a mark or character faſhioned or engraven in the very ſubſtance of the ſoul, as letters are cut into glaſs with a diamond. Conſcience is not only the principal *engagée* obliged unto God as a judge, but the principal director and guide of the ſoul in its courſes and actions, and conſequently the guilt of all ſin falls upon it, and reſts in it. The ſoul is both the ſpring and fountain of all actions that go outward from man, and the term or receptacle of all actions inward; but in both ſorts of actions, going outward, and coming inward, conſcience is the chief counſellor, guide and director in all, and ſo the guilt which is contracted either way muſt be upon its head. It is the bridle of the ſoul to reſtrain it from ſin, the eye of the ſoul to direct its courſe; and therefore is principally chargeable with all the evils of life. Bodily members are but inſtruments, and the will itſelf, as high and noble a faculty or power as it is, moveth not, until the judgement cometh to a concluſion, and the debate be ended in the mind. Now in the whole courſe and compaſs of a ſinner's life in this world, what treaſures of guilt muſt need be lodged in his conſcience? What a magazine of ſin and filth muſt be laid up there? It is ſaid of a wicked man, [Job xx. 11.] 'His 'bones are full of the ſins of his youth;' meaning his ſpirit, mind, or conſcience is as full of ſin, as bones are of marrow; yea, the very ſins of his youth are enough to fill them; and [Rom. ii. 5.] they are ſaid 'to treaſure up 'wrath againſt the day of wrath,' which is only done by treaſuring up guilt; for wrath and guilt are treaſured up together in proportion to each other. Every day of his life vaſt ſums have been caſt into this treaſury, and the

patience

patience of God waiteth till it be full, before he call the ſinner to an account and reckoning, [Gen. xv. 16.]

Prop. II. *All the ſin and guilt contracted upon the ſouls and conſciences of impenitent men in this world, accompanies and follows their departed ſouls to judgement, and there brings them under the dreadful condemnation of the great and terrible God, which cuts off all their hopes and comforts for ever.*

'If you believe not that I am he, you ſhall die in your 'ſins,' [John viii. 24. and Job xx. 11.] 'His bones are 'full of the ſins of his youth, which ſhall lye down with 'him in the duſt.' No propoſition lyes clearer in ſcripture, or ſhould lye with greater weight on the hearts of ſinners: nothing but pardon can remove guilt; but without faith and repentance there never was nor ſhall be a pardon, [Acts x. 43. Rom. iii. 24, 25. Luke xxiv. 46, 47.] look, as the graces of believers, ſo the ſins of unbelievers follow the ſoul whitherſoever it goes. All their ſins who die out of Chriſt, cry to them when they go hence, 'We are thy works, and we will follow thee.' The acts of ſin are tranſient, but the guilt and effects of it are permanent; and it is evident by this, that in the great day their conſciences, which are the books of record wherein all their ſins are regiſtered, will be opened, and they ſhall be judged by them, and out of them, [Rev. xx. 12.] Now before that general judgement, every ſoul comes to its particular judgement, and that immediately after death: of this I apprehend the apoſtle to ſpeak in Heb. ix. 27. 'It is appointed for all men once to die, 'but after that the judgement.' The ſoul is preſently ſtated by this judgement in its everlaſting and fixed condition. The ſoul of a wicked man appearing before God in all its ſin and guilt, and by him ſentenced, immediately it gives up all its hope, [Prov. xi. 7.] 'When a wicked 'man dieth, his expectation ſhall periſh; and the hope of 'unjuſt men periſheth.' His ſtrong hope periſheth, as ſome read it, (i. e.) his ſtrong deluſion; for alas! he took his own ſhadow for a bridge over the great waters, and is unexpectedly plunged into the gulph of eternal miſery, as [Matt. vii. 22.] This periſhing or cutting off

of hope is that which is called in ſcripture the death of the ſoul, for ſo long the ſoul will live as it hath any hope. The deferring of hope makes it ſick, but the final cutting off of hope ſtrikes it quite dead, (i. e.) dead as to all joy, comfort, or expectation of any for ever, which is that death which an immortal ſoul is capable to ſuffer: the righteous hath hope in his death, but every unregenerate man in the world breathes out his laſt hope with his laſt breath, which ſtrikes terror into the very center of the ſoul, and is a death wound to it.

Prop. III. *The ſouls of the damned are exceeding large and capacious ſubjects of wrath and torment; and in their ſeparate ſtate their capacity is greatly enlarged, both by laying aſleep all thoſe affections whoſe exerciſe is relieving, and thoroughly awakening all thoſe paſſions which are tormenting.*

The ſoul of man being by nature a ſpirit, an intelligent ſpirit, and in its ſubſtantial faculties aſſimilated to God, whoſe image it bears, it muſt for that reaſon be exquiſitely ſenſible of all the impreſſions and touches of the wrath of God upon it. The ſpirit of man is a moſt tender, ſenſible, and apprehenſive creature: the eye of the body is not ſo ſenſible of a touch, a nerve of the body is not ſo ſenſible when pricked, as the ſpirit of man is of the leaſt touch of God's indignation upon it. 'A wounded ſpirit who can 'bear?' [Prov. xviii. 14.] Other external wounds upon the body, inflicted either by man or God, are tolerable; but that which immediately toucheth the ſpirit of man, is inſufferable; who can bear or endure it? And as the ſpirit of man hath the moſt delicate and exquiſite ſenſe of miſery, ſo it hath a vaſt capacity to receive and let in the fulneſs of anguiſh and miſery into it; it is a large veſſel, called, [Rom. ix. 22.] 'A veſſel of wrath fitted to 'deſtruction.' The large capacity of the ſoul is ſeen in this, that it is not in the power of all the creatures in the world to ſatisfy and fill it: it can drink up (as one ſpeaks) all the rivers of created good, and its thirſt not quenched by ſuch a draught; but after all it cries, give, give. Nothing but an infinite God can quiet and ſatisfy its appetite and raging thirſt. And as it is capable and recep-

tive of more good than is found in all the creatures; ſo it is capable of more miſery and anguiſh than all the creatures can inflict upon it. Let all the elements or men on earth, yea, all the devils and damned in hell, conſpire and unite in a deſign to torment man, yet when they have done all, his ſpirit is capable of a farther degree of torment, a torment as much beyond it, as a rack is beyond a hard bed, or the ſword in his bowels is beyond the ſcratch of a pin. The devils indeed are the executioners and tormentors of the damned; but if that were all they were capable to ſuffer, the torments of the damned would be comparatively mild and gentle to what they are. O the largeneſs of the underſtanding of man! What will it not take into its vaſt capacity?

But add to this, that damned ſouls have all thoſe affections laid in a deep and everlaſting ſleep, the exerciſes whereof would be relieving by emptying their ſouls of any part of their miſery; and all thoſe paſſions thoroughly and everlaſtingly awakened which increaſe their torments. The affections of joy, delight, and hope, are all benumbed in them, and laid faſt aſleep, never to be awakened into act any more. Their hope in ſcripture is ſaid to periſh, (i. e.) it ſo periſheth, that after death it ſhall never exert another act to all eternity. The activity of any of theſe affections would be like a cooling gale or refreſhing ſpring amidſt their torments; but as Adrian lamented himſelf, *nunquam jocos dabis*, thou ſhalt never be merry more. And as the affections are laid aſleep, ſo their paſſions are rouſed and thoroughly awakened to torment them; ſo awakened, as never to ſleep any more. The ſouls of men are ſometimes jogged and ſtartled in this world by the words or rods of God, but preſently they ſleep again and forget all: but hereafter the eyes of their ſouls will be continually held waking to behold and conſider their miſery; their underſtandings will be clear and moſt apprehenſive; their thoughts fixed and determined; their conſciences active and efficacious: and by all this, their capacity to take in the fulneſs of their miſery enlarged to the uttermoſt,

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Prop. IV. *The wrath, indignation, and revenge of God, poured out as the juſt reward of ſin upon the capacious ſouls of the damned, is the principal part of their miſery in hell.*

In the third propoſition I ſhewed you that the ſouls of the damned can hold more miſery than all the creatures can inflict upon them. When the ſoul ſuffers from the hand of man, its ſufferings are but either by way of ſympathy with the body; or if immediately, yet it is but a light ſtroke the hand of a creature can give: but when it has to do with a ſin-revenging God, and that immediately, this ſtroke cuts off the ſpirit of man, as it is expreſſed Pſal. lxxxviii. 16. The body is the cloathing of the ſoul. Moſt of the arrows ſhot at the ſoul in this world do but ſtick in the cloaths, (i. e.) reach the outward man: but in hell, the ſpirit of man is the *white* at which God himſelf ſhoots. All his envenomed arrows ſtrike the ſoul, which is after death laid bare and naked to be wounded by his hand. At death, the ſoul of every wicked man immediately falls into the hands of the living God, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Heb. x. 31. 'Their puniſhment is from the preſence of the Lord, and 'from the glory of his power,' [2 Theſ. i. 9.] They are not put over to their fellow creatures to be puniſhed, but God will do it himſelf, and glorify his power as well as juſtice in their puniſhment. The wrath of God lies immediately upon their ſpirits, and this is the fiery indignation which devoureth the adverſaries, [Heb. x. 27.] A fire that licks up the very ſpirit of man. Who knoweth the power of his anger? [Pſal. xc. 11.] How inſupportable it is you may a little gueſs by that expreſſion of the prophet Nahum, chap. i. 5, 6. 'The 'mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the 'earth is burnt at his preſence, yea, the world, and all 'that dwell therein. Who can ſtand before his indigna-'tion? And who can abide in the fierceneſs of his anger? 'His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are 'thrown down by him.' And, as if anger and wrath were not words of a ſufficient edge and ſharpneſs, it is called

called fiery indignation and vengeance, words denoting the moſt intenſe degree of divine wrath. For, indeed, his power is to be glorified in the deſtruction of his enemies, and therefore now he will do it to purpoſe. He takes them now into his own hands. No creature can come at the ſoul immediately, that is God's prerogative, and now he hath to do with it himſelf in fury and revenges poured out. Can thy hands be ſtrong, or thy heart endure when I ſhall deal with thee? [Ezek. xxii. 14.] Alas! the ſpirit quails and dies under it. This is the hell of hells. What doleful cries and lamentations have we heard from God's deareſt children, when but ſome few drops of his anger have been ſprinkled upon their ſouls here in this world! Alas! there is no compare betwixt the anger or fatherly diſcipline of God over the ſpirits of his children, and the indignation poured out from the beginning of revenges upon his enemies.

Prop. V. *The ſeparate ſpirit of a damned man becomes a tormentor to itſelf by the various and efficacious actings of its own conſcience, which are a ſpecial part of its torment in the other world.*

Conſcience, which ſhould have been the ſinner's curb on earth, becomes the whip that muſt laſh his ſoul in hell. Neither is there any faculty or power belonging to the ſoul of man ſo fit and able to do it as his own conſcience. That which was the ſeat and center of all guilt, now becomes the ſeat and center of all torments. The ſuſpenſion of its tormenting power in this world is a myſtery and wonder to all that duly conſider it. For certainly, ſhould the Lord let a ſinner's conſcience fly upon him with rage in the midſt of his ſins and pleaſures, it would put him into a hell upon earth, as we ſee in the doleful inſtances of Judas, Spira, &c. but he keeps a hand of reſtraint upon them generally in this life, and ſuffers them to ſleep quietly by a grumbling or ſcared conſcience, which couches by them as a ſleepy lion, and lets them alone. But no ſooner is the Chriſtleſs ſoul turned out of the body, and caſt for eternity at the bar of God, but conſcience is rouſed, and put into a rage never to be appeaſed

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any more. It now racks and tortures the miſerable ſoul with its utmoſt efficacy and activity. The mere preſages and forebodings of wrath by the conſciences of ſinners in this world, have made them lie with a ghaſtly paleneſs in their faces, an univerſal trembling in all their members, a cold ſweating horror upon their panting boſoms, like men already in hell: but this, all this is but as the ſweating or giving of the ſtones before the great rain falls. The activities of conſcience (eſpecially in hell) are various, vigorous, and dreadful to conſider, ſuch are its recognitions, accuſations, condemnations, upbraidings, ſhamings, and fearful expectations.

1. The conſciences of the damned will recognize and bring back the ſins committed in this world freſh to their mind; for what is conſcience but a regiſter or book of records, wherein every ſin is ranked in its proper place and order? This act of conſcience is fundamental to all its other acts; for it cannot accuſe, condemn, upbraid, or ſhame us for that it hath loſt out of its memory, and hath no ſenſe of. Son, remember, ſaid Abraham to Dives in the midſt of his torments. This remembrance of ſins paſt, mercies paſt, opportunities paſt, but eſpecially of hope paſt and gone with them, never to be recovered any more, is like that fire not blown, (of which Zophar ſpeaks) which conſumes him, or the gliſtering ſword coming out of his gall, [Job xx. 24, &c.] 2. It chargeth and accuſeth the damned ſoul, and its charges are home, poſitive, and ſelf-evident charges; a thouſand legal and unexceptionable witneſſes cannot confirm any point more than one witneſs in a man's boſom can do, [Rom. ii. 15.] it convicts and ſtops their mouths, leaving them without any excuſe or apology. Juſt and righteous are the judgements of God upon thee, ſaith conſcience; in all this ocean of miſery there is not one drop of injury or wrong: the judgement of God is according unto truth. 3. It condemns as well as chargeth and witneſſeth, and that with a dreadful ſentence; backing and approving the ſentence and judgement of God, [I. John iii. 21.] every ſelf-deſtroyer will be a ſelf-condemner. This is a prime part of their miſery.

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4. The upbraidings of conſcience in hell are terrible and inſufferable things: to be continually hit in the teeth, and twitted with our madneſs, wilfulneſs, and obſtinacy, as the cauſe of all that eternal miſery which we have pulled down upon our own heads, what is it but the rubbing of the wound with ſalt and vinegar? Of this torment holy Job was afraid, and therefore reſolved what in him lay to prevent it, when he ſaith, chap. xxvii. 6. my heart (*i. e.* my conſcience) ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live. O the twiſts and taunts of conſcience are cruel cuts and laſhes to the ſoul! 5. The ſhamings of conſcience are unſufferable torments. Shame ariſes from the turpitude of diſcovered actions. If ſome men's ſecret filthineſs were but publiſhed in this world, it would confound them; what then will it be when all ſhall lye open, as it will after this life, and their own conſciences ſhall caſt the ſhame of all upon them? They ſhall not only be derided by God, [Prov. i. 26.] but by their own conſciences alſo. Laſtly, the fearful expectations of conſcience ſtill looking forward into more and more wrath to come, this is the very ſum and completement of their miſery. What makes a priſon ſo dreadful to a malefactor, but the trembling expectations he there lives under of the approaching aſſizes? Much after the ſame rate, or rather after the rate of condemned perſons, preparing for execution, do theſe ſpirits in priſon live in the other world. But alas! no inſtance or ſimilitude can reach home to their caſe.

Prop. VI. *That which makes the torments and terrors of the damned ſpirits ſo extreme and terrible, is, that they are unrelievable miſeries, and torments for ever.* They are not capable either of, 1. A partial relief by any mitigation, or, 2. A complete relief by a final ceſſation. 1. Not of a partial relief by any mitigation: could they but divert their thoughts from their miſery, as they were wont to do in this world, drink and forget their ſorrows; or had they but any hope of the abatement of their miſery, it would be a relief to them; but both theſe are impoſſible. Their thoughts are fixed and determined; to remove them (though but for a moment) from their miſery, is as im-

poſſible as to remove a mountain; their ſin and miſery is ever before them. As the bleſſed in heaven are *bono confirmati*, ſo fixed and ſettled in bleſſedneſs, that they are not diverted one moment from beholding the bleſſed face of God, for they are ever with the Lord; ſo the damned in hell are *malo obfirmati*, ſo ſettled and fixed in the midſt of all evil, that their thoughts and miſeries are inſeparable for ever. 2. Much leſs can their undone ſtate admit the leaſt hope of relief by a final ceſſation of their miſery.—All hope periſheth from them, and the periſhing of their hope is the plaineſt proof that can be given of the eternity of their miſery. For were there but the remoteſt poſſibility of deliverance at laſt, hope would hang upon that poſſibility: and whilſt hope lives, the ſoul is not quite dead, the death of hope is the death of a man's ſpirit: the cutting off of the ſoul from God, and the laſt act of hope to ſee or enjoy him for ever, is that death which an immortal ſoul is capable of ſuffering. Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, is that ſentence which ſtrikes hope and ſoul dead for ever. In theſe ſix propoſitions you have the true and terrible repreſentation of the ſpirits in priſon, or the ſtate of damned ſouls. I have not mentioned their aſſociation with devils, or the diſmal place of their confinement, which, though they complete their miſery, yet are not the principal parts of it, but rather acceſſories to it, or rivers running into the ocean of their miſery. The ſum of their miſery lyes in what was opened before, and the improvement of is in that which followeth.

Inf. I. Is this the ſtate of ungodly ſouls after death? Then it follows, that neither death nor annihilation are the worſt of evils incident to man. Ariſtotle calls death the moſt terrible of all terribles; and the ſchoolmen affirm annihilation to be a greater evil than the moſt miſerable being; but it is neither ſo, nor ſo: the wrath of God, the worm of conſcience, are much more bitter than death. The pains of death are natural and bodily pains; the wrath of God, and anguiſh of conſcience, are ſpiritual and inward: that is but the pain of a few hours or days, theſe are the unrelieved torments of eternity. And as for annihilation,

nihilation, what a favour would the damned account it! indeed if we reſpect the glory of God's juſtice, which is exemplified and illuſtrated in the ruin of theſe miſerable ſouls, it is better they ſhould abide in the eternal monuments thereof, than not to be at all; but with reſpect to themſelves, we may ſay, as Chriſt doth of the ſon of perdition, [Matt. xxvi. 24.] 'Good had it been for them if 'they had never been born:' for a man's ſoul to be of no other uſe than a veſſel of wrath, to receive the indignation, and be filled with the fury of God; ſurely, an untimely birth that was never animated with a reaſonable ſoul, is better than they: for alas! they ſeek for death, but it flies from them. The immortality of their ſouls, which was their dignity and privilege above other creatures, is now their miſery, and that which continually feeds and perpetuates their flame. Here is a being without the comfort of it, a being only to howl and tremble under divine wrath: a being therefore which they would gladly exchange with the contemptibleſt fly, or moſt loathſome toad, but it cannot be exchanged or annihilated.

Inf. II. Hence it follows, that the pleaſures of ſin are dear-bought and coſtly pleaſures. There is a greater diſproportion betwixt that pleaſure and this wrath, than betwixt a drop of honey and a ſea of gall. Could a man diſtil all the imaginable pleaſure of ſin, and drink nothing elſe but the higheſt and moſt refined delights of it all his life, though his life ſhould be protracted to the term of Methuſelah's; yet one day or night under the wrath of God would make it a dear bargain. But, 1. it is certain ſin hath no ſuch pleaſure to give you: they are all imbittered either by adverſe ſtrokes of Providence from without, or painful and dreadful gripes and twinges of conſcience within; [Job xx. 14.] 'His meat in his bowels is turned, 'it is the gall of aſps within him.' 2. It is as certain the time of a ſinner is near its period when he is at the height of his pleaſure in ſin: for look, as the high delights in God ſpeak the maturity of a ſoul for heaven, and it will not be long before ſuch be in heaven; ſo the heights of delight in ſin anſwerably ſpeak the maturity of ſuch

a ſoul for hell, and it will not belong ere it be there. Sin is now a big embrio, and ſpeedily the ſoul travels with death. 3. According to the meaſure of delights men have had in ſin, will be the degrees and meaſures of their torment in hell, [Rev. xviii. 7.] ſo much torment and ſorrow as there was delight and pleaſure in ſin. 4. To conclude, the pleaſures of ſin are but for a ſeaſon, as you read, Heb. xi. 25.; but the wrath of God in hell is for ever and ever. There is a time when the pleaſures of ſin cannot be called pleaſure to come, but the wrath of God that will ſtill be wrath to come. O conſider for what a trifle you ſell your ſouls! When Lyſimachus parted with his kingdom for a draught of water, he ſaid, when he had drank it, for how ſhort a pleaſure have I ſold a kingdom! And Jonathan lamented, [I. Sam. xiv. 43.] 'I taſted but 'a little honey, and I muſt die.' Satan would not charm ſo powerfully as he doth with the pleaſure of ſin, if this point were well believed, and heartily applied.

Inf. III. *What a matchleſs madneſs is it to caſt the ſoul into God's priſon, to ſave the body out of man's priſon!*

Men have their priſon and God hath his; but becauſe the one is an object of ſenſe, and the other an object of faith; that only is feared, and this ſlighted all over this unbelieving world, except by a very ſmall number of men who tremble at the word of God. Now this, I ſay, is the height of madneſs, and will appear to be ſo in a juſt collation of both in a few particulars. (1.) Man's priſon reſtrains the body only, God's priſon, ſoul and body, [Matt. x. 28.] the ſpirits of men (as my text ſpeaks) are the priſoners there. O what a vaſt odds doth this ſingle difference make! A thouſand times more than the captivating and binding of the greateſt king or emperor differs from the impriſonment of a poor mechanic or vagrant beggar. (2.) In man's priſon there are many comforts and unſpeakable refreſhments from heaven, but in God's priſon none, but the direct contrary. You read of the apoſtles, Acts xvi. 25. how they ſang in the priſon: the ſpirit of God made them a banquet of heavenly joys, and they could not but ſing at it; though their feet were

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in the ſtocks, their ſpirits were never more at liberty. Algerius dated his letters from the delectable orchard of the Leonine priſon; where, ſaith he, flows the ſweeteſt nectar. Another tells us Chriſt was always kind to him, but ſince he became a priſoner for him, he even overcame himſelf in kindneſs. I verily think, ſaith he, the chains of my Lord are all overlaid with pure gold, and his croſs perfumed. But the worſt terrors of the priſoners in hell come from the preſence of the Lord, [II. Theſſ. i. 9.] 'God is a terror to them.' (3.) The cauſe for which a man is caſt into priſon by men, may be his duty, and ſo his conſcience muſt be at laſt quiet, if not joyful in ſuch ſufferings. So it was with Paul, [Acts xxviii. 20.] 'For 'the hope of Iſrael am I bound with this chain:' this diffuſes joy and peace through the conſcience into the whole man. But the cauſe for which men are caſt into God's priſon, is their ſin and guilt, which arms their own conſciences againſt them, and makes them, as you heard before, ſelf-tormentors, terrors to themſelves. What odds is there? (4.) In man's priſon the moſt excellent company and ſweet ſociety may be found. Paul and Silas were fellow priſoners. In Queen Mary's days the moſt excellent company to be found in England was in the priſons: priſons were turned into churches. But in God's priſon no better ſociety is to be found than that of devils and damned reprobates, [Matt. xxv. 41.] (5.) In man's priſon there is hope of a comfortable deliverance, but in God's priſon none: [Matt. v. 26.] 'Thou ſhalt 'not come out thence, till thou haſt paid the laſt mite.' It is an everlaſting priſon. Compare theſe few obvious particulars, and judge then what is to be thought of that man, who ſtands readier to caſt himſelf into any guilt than into the leaſt ſuffering. What is it but as if a man ſhould offer his neck to the ſword to ſave his head? The Lord convince us what trifles our eſtates, liberties, and lives are to our ſouls, or to the peace and purity of our conſciences.

Inf. IV. *What an invaluable mercy is the pardon of ſin, which ſets the ſoul out of all danger of going to this priſon;*

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When the debt is ſatisfied, a man may walk as boldly before the priſon-door, as he doth before his own: they that owe nothing, fear no bailiffs. It is the law (as I ſaid before) that commits men to priſon; a mittimus is but an inſtrument of law; but the righteouſneſs of the law is fulfilled in them that believe, [Rom. viii. 4.] Yea, they are made 'the righteouſneſs of God in him,' [II. Cor. v. 21.] There can be no proceſs of law againſt them. For who ſhall condemn, when it is God that juſtifieth? [Rom. viii. 33, 34.] And that divine juſtice might be no bar to our faith or comfort, he adds, 'it is Chriſt that 'died;' and yet farther, to aſſure us that his death hath made plenary ſatisfaction to God for all our ſins and debts, it is added, 'yea, rather that is riſen again: q. d. If the debts of believers to God were not fully paid and ſatisfied for by the blood of Chriſt, how comes it to paſs that our ſurety is diſcharged, as by his reſurrection he appears to be? O believer, thy bonds are cancelled, the hand-writing that was againſt thee is nailed to the croſs; the the blood of Chriſt hath done that for thee, that all the gold and ſilver in the world could not do! [I. Pet. i. 18, 19.] It is a counter-price fully anſwering to thy debts, [Matt. xx. 28.] And hence, to the eternal joy of thy heart, reſult three properties of thy pardon, which are able to make thine eyes guſh out with tears of joy whilſt thou art reading of it.

1. It is a free pardon to thy ſoul; though it coſt Chriſt dear, it coſts thee nothing. We have redemption, even 'the remiſſion of ſins, according to the riches of his 'grace,' [Eph. i. 7.] The project of it was God's, not thine; the price for it was Chriſt's blood, not thine: the glory and riches of free grace are illuſtriouſly diſplayed in thy forgiveneſs. 2. It is as full as it is free; a complete and perfect cauſe produceth a complete and perfect effect, [Acts xiii. 39.] 'Juſtified from all things.' Whatever thy ſins be for nature, number, or circumſtances of aggravations, they cannot exceed the value of the meritorious cauſe of remiſſion. The blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin. 3. It muſt be as firm as it is free and full,

full, even an irrevocable pardon for evermore. Chriſt did not ſhed his blood at a hazard; the way of juſtification by faith makes the promiſe ſure, [Rom. iv. 16.] The juſtified ſhall never come again under condemnation. O the unſpeakable joy that flows from this ſpring! O the triumphs of faith upon this foundation!

Is it not raviſhing, melting, overwhelming and amazing, to think thus with thyſelf? Here ſit I with a joyful, plenary, free pardon of ſin in my hand, whilſt many who never ſinned to that height and degree I have, lye groaning, howling, ſweating, and trembling under the indignation of God poured out like fire upon their ſouls in hell! a greater ſinner never ſaved, and leſſer damned. O how unſpeakably ſweet is that reſt into which my terrified and diſquieted ſoul is come by faith! [Rom. v. 1. Heb. iv. 3.] 'We which have believed, do enter into reſt.' O bleſſed calm, after a dreadful tempeſt! This poor breaſt of mine was lately panting, ſweating, trembling under the horrors of wrath to come, terrified with the viſions of hell. No other ſound was in mine ears, but that of fiery indignation to devour the adverſaries. O what price can be put upon my *quietus eſt!* What value upon a pardon, delivered as it were at the ladder's foot! O precious hand of faith that receives it! But O the moſt precious blood of Chriſt which purchaſed it! If Satan now come with his accuſations, the law with its comminations, death with its dreadful ſummons, I have in a readineſs to anſwer them all. Here is the law, the wrath of God, and everlaſting burnings, the juſt demerit of ſin upon one ſide, and a poor ſinful creature on the other; but the covenant of grace hath ſolved all. An act of oblivion is paſt in heaven, 'I will forgive their iniquities, and their ſins and 'tranſgreſſions will I remember no more.' In this act of grace my ſoul is included; I am in Chriſt, and there is no condemnation. Die I muſt, but damned I ſhall not be; my debts are paid, my bonds are cancelled, my conſcience is quieted; let death do its worſt, it ſhall do me no harm; that blood which ſatisfies God, may well ſatisfy me.

Inf. V. *How amazingly ſad and deplorable is the ſecurity and ſtillneſs of the conſciences of ſinners under all their own guilt, and the immediate danger of God's everlaſting wrath!*

Philoſophers obſerve, that before an earthquake the weather is exceeding calm, not a breath of wind ſtirring. So it is in the conſciences of many juſt before the tempeſt and ſtorm of God's wrath pours down upon them. What a golden morning opened upon Sodom, and began that fatal day? Little did they imagine ſhowers of fire had been ready to fall from ſo pleaſant and ſerene a ſky as they ſaw over their heads. How ſecure, ſtill, and unconcerned are thoſe to day, who it may be ſhall rage, roar, and tremble in hell to-morrow? Cæſar hearing of a citizen of Rome who was deep in debt, and yet ſlept ſoundly, would needs have his pillow, as ſuppoſing there was ſome ſtrange charming virtue in it. It is wonderful to conſider what ſhift men make to keep their conſciences in that ſtillneſs and quiet they do, under ſuch loads of guilt and threatenings of wrath ready to be executed upon them. It muſt be ſome ſtrong opium that ſo ſtupifies and benumbs their conſciences; and upon inquiry into the matter we ſhall find it to be the effect of, 1. A ſtrong deluſion of Satan, 2. A ſpiritual, judicial ſtroke of God.

1. This ſtillneſs of conſcience upon the brink of damnation proceeds from the ſtrong deluſions of Satan; blinding their eyes, and feeding their falſe hopes; he removes the evil day at many years imaginary diſtance from them, and interpoſeth many a fair day betwixt them and it, and in that interpoſed ſeaſon, time enough to prepare for it; without ſuch an artifice as this, his houſe would be in an uproar, but this keeps all in peace, [Luke xi. 21.] By preſuming he feeds their hopes, and by their hopes deſtroys their ſouls. Some he diverts from all ſerious thoughts of this day, by the pleaſures, and others by the cares of this life; and ſo that day cometh upon them unawares, [Luke xxi. 34.] 2. This ſtillneſs of conſcience in ſo miſerable and dangerous a ſtate, is the effect of a ſpiritual, judicious ſtroke of God upon the children of

wrath.

wrath. That is a dreadful word, [Iſa. vi. 10.] 'Make the 'heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and 'ſhut their eyes: the eye and ear are the principal doors or inlets to the heart; when theſe are ſhut, the heart muſt be inſenſible, as the fat of the body is. There is a ſpirit of a deep ſleep poured out judicially upon ſome men, [Iſa. xxix. 10.] ſuch as that upon Adam, when God took a rib from his ſide, and he felt it not: but this is upon the ſoul, and is the ſame as to give up a man to a reprobate ſenſe.

Inf. VI. *The caſe of a diſtreſſed conſcience upon earth is exceeding ſad, and calls upon all for the tendereſt pity and utmoſt help from men.*

You ſee the labourings of conſcience under the ſenſe of guilt and wrath is a ſpecial part of the torments of hell; of which there is not a livelier emblem or picture than the diſtreſſes of conſcience in this world. It muſt be thankfully confeſſed there are two great differences betwixt the terrors of conſcience here and there: one in the degrees of anguiſh, the other in the reliefs of that anguiſh. The ordinary diſtreſſes of conſcience here, compared with thoſe of the damned, are as the flame of a candle to a fiery oven, a mild and gentle fire: or as the ſparks that fly out of the top of a chimney, to the dreadful eruptions of Veſuvius or mount Ætna. Beſides, theſe are capable of relief, but thoſe are unrelievable; their hearts die, becauſe their hope is periſhed from the Lord. But yet of all the miſeries and diſtreſſes incident to man in this world, none like thoſe of diſtreſſed conſciences: the terrors of God ſet themſelves in array, or are drawn up in battalia againſt the ſoul, [Job vi. 4.] whilſt I ſuffer thy terrors (ſaith Heman) I am diſtracted, [Pſal. lxxxviii. 15.] Yea, they not only diſtract, but cut off the ſpirit, as he adds, [ver. 16.] They lick up the very ſpirit of a man, and none can bear them, [Prov. xviii. 14.] for now a man hath to do immediately with God; yea, with the wrath of the great and dreadful God: this wrath, which is the moſt acute and ſharp of all torments, falls upon the moſt

tender and ſenſible part; the ſpirit and mind, which now lyes open and naked before him to be wounded by it. No crearure can adminiſter the leaſt relief by the application of any temporal comfort or refreſhment to it. Gold and ſilver, wife and children, meat and melody, ſignify no more than the drawing off a ſilk ſtocking to cure the paroxyſms of the gout. All that can be done for their relief is by ſeaſonable, judicious and tender applications of ſpiritual remedies: and what can be done, ought to be done for them. What heart can hear the voice like that of Job, 'Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye 'my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me;' and not melt into compaſſions over them? Is there a word of wiſdom in thy heart, let thy tongue apply it to the relief of thy diſtreſſed brother; whilſt his heart meditates terror, let thine meditate his ſuccour. It is not impoſſible but thou who lendeſt a friendly hand to another, mayeſt ere long need one thyſelf; and he that hath ever felt the terrors of the Almighty upon his ſoul, hath motive enough to drawforth the bowels of his pity toanother in the like caſe. Alas! for poor diſtreſſed ſouls who have either none about them that underſtand, and are able and willing to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to their weary ſouls, or too many about them to exaſperate their ſorrows, and perſecute them whom God hath ſmitten. You that have both ability and opportunity for it, are under the ſtrongeſt engagements in the world to endeavour their relief with all faithfulneſs, ſeriouſneſs, compaſſion, and conſtancy. Did Chriſt ſhed his blood for the ſaving of ſouls, and wilt thou not ſpend thy breath for them? Shall any man that hath found mercy from God, ſhew none to his brother? God forbid. A ſoul in hell is out of your reach, but theſe that are in the ſuburbs of hell are not: the candle of intenſe ſorrow is put to the thread of their miſerable life: and ſhould they be ſuffered to drop into hell whilſt you ſtand by as unconcerned? Spectators to ſuch a tragedy will have but little peace. Your unmercifulneſs to their ſouls will be a wound to your own.

Inf. VII. *Be hence informed of the evil that is in ſin, be convinced of the evil that is in it by the eternal miſery that follows it.*

If hell be out of meaſure dreadful, then ſin muſt be out of meaſure ſinful: the torments of hell do not exceed the demerit of ſin, though they exceed the underſtandings of men to conceive them. God will lay upon no man more than is right. Sin is the founder of hell: all the miſeries and torments there are but the treaſures of wrath which ſinners in all ages have been treaſuring up; and how dreadful ſoever it be, it is but the Αντιμιζία, the recompence which is meet, [Rom. vi. ult.] 'The wages of ſin 'is death.'

We have ſlight thoughts of ſin; 'Fools make a mock 'of ſin:' but if the Lord, by the conviction of men's conſciences, did but lead them through the chambers of death, and give them a ſight of the wrath to come; could we but ſee the piles that are made in hell, (as the prophet calls them, Iſa. xxx. 33.) to maintain the flames of vengeance to eternity; could we but underſtand in what dialect the damned ſpeak of ſin, who ſee the treaſures of wrath broken up to avenge it, ſurely it would alter our apprehenſions of ſin, and ſtrike cold to the very heart of ſinners. Cannot the extremity and eternity of hell torments exceed the evil that is in ſin? What words then can expreſs the evil of it! hell-flames have the nature of a puniſhment, but not of an atonement. O think on this, you that look upon ſin as the verieſt trifle, that will ſin for the value of a penny, that look upon all the humiliations, broken-hearted confeſſions, and bitter moans of the ſaints under ſin, as frenzy or melancholy, ſlighting them as a company of half-witted hypochondriac perſons. Thou that never hadſt one ſick night or ſad day in all thy life, upon the account of ſin, let me tell thee, that breaſt of thine muſt be the ſeat of ſorrow; that frothy, airy ſpirit of thine muſt be acquainted with emphatical ſobs and groans. God grant it may be on this ſide hell by effectual repentance, elſe it muſt be there in the extremity and eternity of ſorrows.

Inf. VIII. *What enemies are they to the ſouls of men, who are Satan's inſtruments to draw them into ſin, or who ſuffer ſin to lie upon them!*

When there were but two perſons in the world, one drew the other into ſin; and among the millions of men and women now in the world, where are there two to be found that have in no caſe been ſnares to draw ſome into ſin? Some tempt deſignedly, taking the devil's work out of his hands; others virtually and conſequentially by examples, which have a compelling power to draw others with them into ſin. The firſt ſort are among the worſt of ſinners, [Prov. i. 10.] the latter are among the beſt of ſaints; ſee Gal. ii. 14. Whoſe converſation is ſo much in heaven, that nothing falls out in the courſe thereof, which may not farther ſome or other in their way to hell? Among wicked men there are five ſorts eminently acceſſory to the guilt and ruin of other men's ſouls. (1.) Looſe profeſſors, whoſe lives give their lips the lie; whoſe converſations make their profeſſions bluſh. (2.) Scandalous apoſtates, whoſe fall is more prejudicial than their profeſſion was ever beneficial to others. (3.) Cruel perſecutors, who make the lives, liberties, and eſtates of men the occaſion of the ruin of their conſciences. (4.) Ignorant and faithleſs miniſters, who ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked, that they ſhould not return from their wickedneſs. (5.) Wicked relations, who quench and damp every hopeful beginning of conviction and affection in their friends. Of all which I ſhall diſtinctly ſpeak in the next diſcourſe, to which therefore I remit it at preſent. And many there are who ſuffer ſin to lie upon others, without a wiſe and ſeaſonable reproof to them. O what cruelty to ſouls is here! The day is coming when they will curſe the time that ever they knew you. It is poſſible you may repent, but then it may be thoſe whoſe ſouls you have helped to ruin, are gone, and quite out of your reach.—The Lord make you ſenſible what you have done in ſeaſon, leſt your repentance come too late for yourſelves and them alſo.

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Inf. IX. *How poor a comfort is it to him that carries all his ſins out of this world with him, to leave much earthly treaſure (eſpecially if gotten by ſin) behind him?*

It is a poor conſolation to be praiſed where thou art not, and tormented where thou art; to purchaſe a life of pleaſure to others on earth at the price of thy own everlaſting miſery in hell. All the conſolation ſenſual, voluptuous, and oppreſſing worldings have, is but this, that they were coached to hell in pomp and ſtate, and have left the ſame chariot to bring their graceleſs children after them in the ſame equipage to the place of torments. There be five conſiderations provoking pity to them that are thus paſt into a miſerable eternity, and caution to all that are following after in the ſame path. Firſt, That fatal miſtake in the practical underſtanding and judgement of man deſerves a compaſſionate lamentation, as the cauſe and reaſon of their eternal miſcarriage and ruin. They looked upon trifles as things of greateſt neceſſity, and the moſt neceſſary things as mere trifles: putting the greateſt weight and value upon that which little concerned them, and none at all upon their greateſt concernment in the whole world, [Luke xii. 21.] Secondly, The perpetual diverſions that the trifles of this world gave them from the main uſe and end of their time. O what a hurry and thick ſucceſſion of earthly buſineſs and incumbrances filled up their days! So that they could find no time to go alone and think of the awful and weighty concernments of the world to come, [James v. 5.] Thirdly, The total waſte and expence of the only ſeaſon of ſalvation about theſe vaniſhed, impertinent trifles, which is never more to be recovered, [Eccl. ix. 10.] Fourthly, That theſe deluding ſhadows, the pleaſures of a moment, is all that they had in exchange for their ſouls: a goodly price it was valued at, [Matt. xvi. 26.] Fifthly, That by ſuch a life they have not only ruined their own ſouls, but put their poſterity, by their education of them in the ſame courſe of life, into the ſame path of deſtruction in which they went to hell before them, [Pſal. xlix. 13.] 'Their poſterity 'approve their ſaying.'

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Inf. X. *How rational and commendable is the courage and reſolution of thoſe Chriſtians who chuſe to bear all the ſufferings in this world from the hands of men, rather than to defile and wound their conſciences with ſin, and thereby expoſe their ſouls to the wrath of God for ever!*

That which men now call pride, humour, fancy, and ſtubbornneſs, will one day appear to be their great wiſdom, and the excellency of their ſpirits. It is the tenderneſs of their conſciences, not the pride and ſtoutneſs of their ſtomachs, which makes them inflexible to ſin; they know the terrors of a wounded conſcience, and had rather endure any other trouble from the hands of men, than fall by known ſin into the hands of an angry God. Try them in other matters wherein the glory of God, and peace or purity of their conſciences are not concerned, and ſee if you can charge them with ſtubbornneſs and ſingularity. It was the excellency of the ſpirits of the primitive Chriſtians, that they durſt tell the emperor to his face, when he threatened them with torments; pardon us, O emperor, thou threateneſt us with a priſon, but God with hell. Do we call that ingenuity and good nature which makes the mind ſoft and tractable to temptations, and will rather venture upon guilt than be eſteemed ſingular? Salvian tells us of ſome in his time, who were compelled to be evil, leſt they ſhould be accounted vile; and was that their excellency? May I not fitly apply the words of Salvian here? O in what honour and repute is Chriſt among Chriſtians, when religion ſhall make them baſe and ignoble! He that underſtands what the puniſhment of ſin will be in hell, ſhould endure all things rather than yield to ſin on earth. Indeed, if you that threaten and tempt others to violate their conſciences, could bear the wrath of God for them in hell, it were ſomewhat; but we know there is no ſuffering by a proxy there; they tremble at the word of God, and have felt the burden of guilt, and dare not yield to ſin, though they yield their eſtates and bodies to prevent it.

Inf. XI. *How patiently ſhould we bear the afflictions of this life, by which ſin is prevented and purged?*

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The diſcipline of our ſpirits belongs to God the father of ſpirits; he corrects us here, that we may not be puniſhed hereafter, [I. Cor. xi. 32.] 'We are chaſtened of the 'Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.' It is better for us to groan under afflictions on earth, than to roar under revenging wrath in hell. Parents who are wiſe as well as tender, had rather hear their children ſob and cry under the rod, than ſtand with halters about their necks on the ladder, bewailing the deſtructive indulgence of their parents. Your chaſtiſements, when ſanctified, are preventive of all the miſery opened before. It is therefore as unreaſonable to murmur againſt God, becauſe you ſmart under his rod, as it would be to accuſe you deareſt friend of cruelty, becauſe he ſtrained your arm to ſnatch you from the fall of a houſe or wall which he ſaw ready to cruſh and overwhelm you in its ruins. If we had leſs affliction, we ſhould have more guilt. We ſee how apt we are to break over the hedge, and go aſtray from God, with all the clogs of affliction deſigned for our reſtraint; what ſhould we do if we had no clog at all? It is better for you to be whipped to heaven with all the rods of affliction, than coached to hell with all the pleaſures of the world. Chriſtian, thy God ſees, if thou do not, that all theſe troubles are few enough to ſave thee from ſin and hell. Thy corruptions require all theſe rods, and all little enough. 'If need be, ye are in heavineſs,' [I. Pet. i. 6.] If there be need for it, thy deareſt comforts on earth ſhall die, that thy ſoul may live; but if thy mortification to them render their removal needleſs, thou and they ſhall live together. It is better be preſerved in brine, than rot in honey. Sanctified afflictions working under the efficacy of the blood of Chriſt, are the ſafeſt way to our ſouls.

Inf. XII. *How doleful a change doth the death of wicked men make upon them! from palaces on earth, to the priſon of hell.*

No ſooner is the ſoul of a wicked man ſtept out of his own door at death, but the ſerjeants of hell are immediately upon it, ſerving the dreadful ſummons on the law-

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condemned wretch. This arreſt terrifies it more than the hand-writing upon the plaiſter of the wall did him, [Dan. v. 5.] How are all a man's apprehenſions changed in a moment! Out of what a deep ſleep are moſt, and out of what a pleaſant dream of heaven are ſome awakened and ſtartled at death, by the dreadful arreſt and ſummons of God to condemnation! How quickly would all a ſinner's mirth be damped and turned into howlings in this world, if conſcience were but thoroughly awakened! It is but for God to change our apprehenſions now, and it would be done in a moment; but the eyes of moſt mens ſoul's are not opened till death hath ſhut their bodily eyes; and then how ſudden and how ſad a change is made in one day! O think what it is to paſs from all the pleaſures and delights of this world, into the torments and miſeries of that world; from a pleaſant habitation, into an infernal priſon; from the depth of ſecurity, to the extremity of deſperation; from the arms and boſoms of deareſt friends and relations, to the ſociety of damned ſpirits! Lord, what a change is here! Had a gracious change been made upon their hearts by grace, no ſuch doleful change could have been made upon their ſtate by death: little do their ſurviving friends think what they feel, or what is their eſtate in the other world, whilſt they are honouring their bodies with ſplendid and pompous funerals. None on earth have ſo much reaſon to fear death, to make much of life, and uſe all means to continue it, as thoſe who will and muſt be ſo great loſers by the exchange.

Inf. XIII. *See here the certainty and inevitableneſs of the judgement of the great day.*

This priſon, which is continually filling with the ſpirits of wicked men, is an undeniable evidence of it: for why is hell called a priſon, and why are the ſpirits of men confined and chained there, but with reſpect to the judgment of the great day? As there is a neceſſary connection betwixt ſin and puniſhment, ſo betwixt puniſhing and trying the offender: there are millions of ſouls in cuſtody, a world of ſpirits in priſon; theſe muſt be brought forth to their trial, for God will lay upon no man more than

than is right; the legality of their mittimus to hell will be evidenced in their ſolemn day of trial. God hath therefore 'appointed a day in which he will judge the world 'in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he hath ordained,' [Acts xvii. 31.] Here ſinners run in arrears, and contract vaſt debts; in hell they are ſeized and committed, at judgement tried and caſt for the ſame. This will be a dreadful day; thoſe that have ſpent ſo prodigally upon the patience of God, muſt now come to a ſevere account for all; they have paſt their particular judgement immediately after death, [Eccleſ. xii. 7. Heb. ix. 27.] By this they know how they ſhall ſpeed in the general judgement, and how it ſhall be with them for ever; but though this private judgement ſecures their damnation ſufficiently, yet it clears not the juſtice of God before angels and men ſufficiently, and therefore they muſt appear once more before his bar, [II. Cor. v. 10.] In the fearful expectation of this day thoſe trembling ſpirits now lie in priſon, and that fearful expectation is a principal part of their preſent miſery and torment. You that refuſe to come to the throne of grace, ſee if you can refuſe to make your appearance at the bar of juſtice. You that braved and brow-beat your miniſters that warned you of it, ſee if you can out-brave your judge too as you did them. Nothing more ſure or awful than ſuch a day as this.

Inf. XIV. *How much are miniſters, parents, and all to whom the charge of ſouls is committed, bound to do all that in them lyes to prevent their everlaſting miſery in the world to come?*

The great apoſtle of the gentiles found the conſideration of the terror of the Lord as a ſpur, urging and enforcing him to miniſterial faithfulneſs and diligence, [II. Cor. v. 11.] 'Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we 'perſuade men.' And the ſame he preſſeth upon Timothy, [II. Tim. iv. 1, 2.] 'I charge thee therefore before 'God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the 'quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom; 'preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon; 'reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doc-

'trine.' O that thoſe to whom ſo great a truſt as the ſouls of men is committed, would labour to acquit themſelves with all faithfulneſs therein, as Paul did, warning every one night and day with tears, that if we cannot prevent their ruin, which is moſt deſirable, yet at leaſt we may be able to take God to witneſs, as he did, that we are pure from the blood of all men. O conſider, my brethren, if your faithful plainneſs and unwearied diligence to ſave men's ſouls produce no other fruit but the hatred of you now; yet it is much eaſier for you to bear that, than that they and you too ſhould bear the wrath of God for ever. We have all of us perſonal guilt enough upon us, let us not add other men's guilt to our account: to be guilty of the blood of the meaneſt man upon earth is a ſin which will cry in your conſciences; but to be guilty of the blood of ſouls, Lord, who can bear it! Chriſt thought them worth his heart-blood; and are they not worth the expence of our breath? Did he ſweat blood to ſave them, and will not we move our lips to ſave them? It is certainly a ſore judgement to the ſouls of men, when ſuch miniſters are ſet over them as never underſtood the value of their people's ſouls, or were never heartily concerned about the ſalvation of their own ſouls.

MATTH. xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?

DIFFICULT duties need to be enforced with powerful arguments. In the 24th verſe of this chapter our Lord preſſeth upon his diſciples the deepeſt and hardeſt duties of ſelf-denial, acquaints them upon what terms

they muſt be admitted into his ſervice; 'If any man will 'come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his 'croſs and follow me.' This hard and difficult duty he enforceth upon them by a double argument, viz. from, 1. The vanity of all ſinful ſhifts from it, ver. 25. 2. The value of their ſouls, which is imported in it, ver. 26. They may ſhift off their duty to the loſs of their ſouls, or ſave their ſouls by the loſs of ſuch trifles. If they eſteem their ſouls above the world, and can be content to put all other things to the hazard for their ſalvation, making account to ſave nothing but them by Chriſtianity; then they come up to Chriſt's terms, and may warrantably and boldly call him their Lord and Maſter; and to ſweeten this choice to them, he doth in my text balance the ſoul, and all the world, weighing them one againſt the other, and ſhews them the infinite odds and diſproportion betwixt them; "What is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?"

What is a man profited?] There is a plain meioſis in the phraſe; and the meaning is, how ineſtimably and irreparably is a man damnified: what a ſoul-ruining bargain would a man make!

If he ſhould gain the whole world.] There is a plain hyperbole in this phraſe; for it never was, nor never will be the lot of any man to be the ſole owner and poſſeſſor of the whole world. But ſuppoſe all the power, pleaſure, wealth, and honour of the whole world, were bid and offered in exchange for a man's ſoul; what a dear purchaſe would it be at ſuch a rate! "What were this (ſays Perſeus) but to win Venice, and then be hanged at the gate of it?" As that man acts like a mad-man, that goes about to purchaſe a treaſure of gold with the loſs of his life: for life being loſt, what is all the gold in the world to him? He can have no enjoyment of it, or comfort in it: ſo here, what is all the world, or as many worlds as there are creatures in it, when the ſoul is loſt, if he gain this?

And loſe his own ſoul.] The compariſon lyes here betwixt one ſingle ſoul and the whole world. The whole

world is no price for the pooreſt, meaneſt, and moſt depiſed ſoul that lives in it. By loſing the ſoul, we are not to underſtand the deſtruction of its being, but of its happineſs and comfort, the cutting of it off from God, and all the hopes of his favour and enjoyment for ever. This is the loſs here intended, a loſs never to be repaired. The whole world can be no recompence for a loſs to the ſoul, if it be but the loſs of its purity or peace for a time; much leſs can it recompenſe the loſs of the ſoul in the loſs of all its happineſs for ever. When a man's chief happineſs is finally loſt, then is his ſoul loſt; for what benefit can it be, nay, how great a miſery muſt it be, to have a being perpetuated in torments for ever? This is the fine or mulct which is ſet upon ſin, as ſome render the word. What ſhall a man gain by ſuch pleaſures, for which God will mulct or fine him at the rate or price of his own ſoul? that is, of all the happineſs, joy and comfort of it to all eternity.

Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?] The queſtion aggravates the ſenſe, and amplifies the loſs and damage of the man that ſells his ſoul for the whole world. There is no recompence in all the world for the hazard or danger of the ſoul one hour; nor would a man that underſtands what ſoul and eternity are, put it into danger for ten thouſand worlds, much leſs for a penny, yea, for nothing, as many do; but to barter and exchange it for the world, to take any thing in lieu of it; this is the height of madneſs. The way of buying in former times was not by money, but by the exchange of one commodity for another; and to this cuſtom Brugenſis thinks this phraſe is alluſive. Now what commodity is found in all the world, or who that is not blinded by the god of this world, can think that the whole world itſelf, if all the rocks in it were rocks of diamonds, and the ſeas and rivers were liquid gold, is a commodity of equivalent worth to his own ſoul? Hence two notes riſe naturally.

Doct. I. *That one ſoul is of more value than the whole world.*

Doct.

Doct. II. *How precious and invaluable ſoever the ſoul of man is, it may be loſt, and caſt away for ever.* I begin with the firſt.

Doct. I. That one ſoul is of more value than the whole world.

I need not ſpend much time in the proof it, when you have conſidered, that he who bought them, hath here weighed and valued them; and that the point before us is the reſult and concluſion of one that hath the beſt reaſon to know the true worth of them. That which I have to do, is to gather out of ſcriptures the particulars; which put together, make up the full demonſtration of the point. And,

1. The invaluable worth of ſouls appears from the manner of their creation. They were created immediately by God, as hath been proved, and that not without the deliberation of the whole Trinity, [Gen. i. 26.] 'Let us make man.' For the production of other creatures, it was enough to give out the word of his command, 'Let there be light, let the earth and the waters 'bring forth;' but when he comes to man, then you have no fiat, let there be, but he puts his own hand immediately to it, as to the maſter-piece of the whole creation; yea, a council is called about it; let us, implying the juſt conſultation and deliberation of all the perſons in the godhead about it, that our hearts might be raiſed to the expectation of ſome extraordinary work to follow, great counſels and wiſe debates being both the forerunners and foundations of great actions and events to enſue thereupon. Thus Elihu in Job xxxv. 10. 'None ſaith, 'where is God my makers? and David in Pſal. cxlix. 2. 'Let Iſrael rejoice in his makers:' in both places the word is plural. The conſultation here is only amongſt the divine perſons, no angels are called to this council-table, the whole matter was to be conducted by the wiſdom, and effected by the power of God; and therefore there was no need to conſult with any but himſelf, the wiſdom of angels being from him: but this great council ſhews what an excellent creature was now to be produced,

duced, and the excellency of that creature man was principally in his ſoul; for the bodies of other creatures, which were made by the word of his command, are as beautiful, elegant, and neat as the body of man; yea, and in ſome reſpects more excellent. The ſoul then was that rare piece, which God in ſo condeſcending an expreſſion tells us was created with the deliberation of the godhead: thoſe great and excellent perſons laid their heads, as it were, together, to project its being. And by the way, this may ſmartly check the pride and arrogance of ſouls, who dare take it upon them to teach God, as we interpretatively do in our cenſures of his works, and murmurs at his diſpoſal of us. Shall that ſoul, which is the project of his wiſdom and counſel, dare to inſtruct or counſel its maker? But that by the by; you ſee there is a tranſcendant dignity and worth in the ſoul of man above all other beings in the world, by the peculiar way of its production into the number of created beings: no wiſe man deliberates long, or calls a council about ordinary matters, much leſs the all-wiſe God.

2. The ſoul hath in itſelf an intrinſic worth and excellency worthy of that divine original whence it ſprang: view it in its noble faculties and admirable powers, and it will appear to be a creature upon which God hath laid out the riches of his wiſdom and power. There you ſhall find a mind ſuſceptive of all light, both natural and ſpiritual, ſhining as the candle of God in the inner man, cloſing with truth as the iron doth with the active loadſtone, a ſhop in which all arts and ſciences are laboured and formed: what are all the famous libraries and monuments of learning, but ſo many ſyſtems of thoughts laboured and perfected in the active inquiſitive minds of men; truth is its natural and delectable object, it purſues eagerly after it, and even ſpreads itſelf and the body too in the chaſe and proſecution of truth; when it lyes deep as a ſubterranean treaſure, the mind ſends out innumerable thoughts, re-enforceing each other in thick ſucceſſions, to dig for, and compaſs that invaluable treaſure; if it be diſguiſed by miſrepreſentation, and vulgar prejudice, and trample

trample in the dirt under that diſguiſe, there is an ability in the mind to diſcern it by ſome lines and features, which are well known to it, and both own, honour and vindicate it under all that dirt and obloquy, with more reſpect than a man will take up a piece of gold, or a ſparkling diamond out of the gutter; it ſearches after it by many painful deductions of reaſon, and triumphs more in the diſcovery of it, than in all earthly treaſures; no gratification of ſenſe like that of the mind, when it graſps its prey for which it hunted. The mind paſſes through all the works of creation, it views the ſeveral creatures on earth, conſiders the fabrick, uſe, and beauty of animals, the ſignatures of plants, penetrating thereby into their nature and virtues: it views the vaſt ocean, and the large train of cauſes laid together in all theſe things, for the good of man, by God, whoſe name it reads in the moſt diminutive creature it beholds on earth. It can, in a moment, mount itſelf from earth to heaven, view the face thereof, deſcribe the motions of the ſun in the ecliptic, calculate tables for the motions of the planets and fixed ſtars, convenient cycles for the computation of time, foretell at a great diſtance the diſmal eclipſes of the ſun and moon, to the very digit, and the portentous conjunctions of the planets, to the very minute of their ingreſs: theſe are the pleaſant employments of the underſtanding.

But there is a higher game at which this eagle plays; it reckons itſelf all this while employed as much beneath its capacity, as Domitian in catching flies. Though theſe be lawful and pleaſant exerciſes, when it hath leiſure for them, yet it is fitted for a much nobler exerciſe, even to penetrate the glorious myſteries of redemption, to trace redeeming love through all the aſtoniſhing methods, and manifold diſcoveries of it; and yet higher than all this, it is capable of an immediate ſight or facial viſion of the bleſſed God, ſhort of which it receives no pleaſure that is fully agreeable to its noble powers and infinite appetites. View its will, and you ſhall find it like a queen upon the throne of the ſoul, ſwaying the ſceptre of liberty in her hand,

hand, (as Culverwell expreſſeth it) with all the affections waiting and attending upon her. No tyrant can force it, no torment can wreſt the golden ſceptre of liberty out of its hand; the keys of all the chambers of the ſoul hang at its girdle, theſe it delivers to Chriſt in the day of his power; victorious grace ſweetly determines it by gaining its conſent, but commits no rape upon it by unnatural coaction. God accepts its offering, though full of imperfections; but no ſervice is accepted without it, how excellent ſoever the matter of it. View the conſcience and thoughts with their ſelf-reflexive abilities, wherein the ſoul retires into itſelf, and ſits concealed from all eyes but his that made it, judging its own actions, and cenſuring its eſtate; viewing its face in its own glaſs, and correcting the indecencies it diſcovers there: things of greateſt moment and importance are ſilently tranſacted in this council chamber betwixt the ſoul and God; ſo remote from the knowledge of all creatures, that neither angels, devils, or men, can know what it is doing there, but by uncertain gueſs, or revelation from God. Here it impleads, condemns, and acquits itſelf as at a privy ſeſſion, with reſpect to the judgement of the great day: here it meets with the beſt of comforts, and with the worſt of terrors, [I. Cor. ii. 11. Rom. ii. 15. II. Cor. i. 12.] Take a ſurvey of its paſſions and affections, and you will find them admirable: ſee how they are placed by divine wiſdom in the ſoul, ſome for defence and ſafety, others for delight and pleaſure. Anger actuates the ſpirits, and rouzeth its courage, enabling it to break through difficulties: fear keeps centinel, watching upon all dangers that approach us; hope foreſtals the good, and anticipates the joys of the next life, and thereby ſupports and ſtrengthens the ſoul under all the diſcouragements and preſſures of the preſent life: love unites it to the chiefeſt good; he that dwelleth in love, dwells in God, and God in him: zeal is the dagger which love draws in God's cauſe and quarrel to ſecure itſelf from ſin, and teſtify its reſentments of God's diſhonour. O what a divine ſpark

is

is the ſoul of man! well might Chriſt prefer it in dignity to the whole world.

3. The worth of a ſoul may be gathered and diſcerned from its ſubjective capacity and hability both of grace and glory. It is capable of all the graces of the Spirit, of being filled with the fulneſs of God, [Eph. iii. 19.] to live to God here, and with God for ever. What excellent graces do adorn ſome ſouls! How are all the rooms richly hanged with divine and coſtly hangings, that God may dwell in them! This makes it like the carved works of the temple, overlaid with pure gold; here is glory upon glory, a new creation upon the old; in the inmoſt parts of ſome ſouls is a ſpiritual altar erected with this inſcription, "Holineſs to the Lord." Here the ſoul offers up itſelf to God in the ſacred flames of love, and here it ſacrifices its vile affections, devoting them to deſtruction to the glory of its God: here God walks with delight, even a delight beyond what he takes in all the ſtately ſtructures and magnificent adorned temples in the whole world, [Iſa. lxvi. 1, 2.] No other ſoul beſides man's is marriageable to Chriſt, or capable of eſpouſals to the King of glory; they were not deſigned, and therefore not endued with a capacity for ſuch an honour as this: but ſuch a capacity hath every ſoul, even the meaneſt on earth, and ſuch honour have all his ſaints: others may, but they are betrothed to Chriſt in this world, and ſhall be preſented without ſpot before him in the world to come, [II. Cor. xi. 2. Eph. v. 27.] It is now a lovely and excellent creature in its naked natural ſtate, much more beautiful and excellent in its ſanctified and gracious ſtate; but what ſhall we ſay, or how ſhall we conceive of it, when all ſpots of ſin are perfectly waſhed off its beautiful face in heaven, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon it! When its filthy garments are taken away, and the pure robes of perfect holineſs, as well as righteouſneſs, ſuperinduced upon this excellent creature! If the imperfect beauty of it, begun in ſanctification, enamoured its Saviour, and made him ſay, Thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes,

with one of the chains of thy neck; what will its beauty and his delight in it be in the ſtate of perfect glorification? As we imagine the circles in the heavens to be vaſtly greater than thoſe we view upon the globe, ſo muſt we imagine in the caſe before us.

4. The preparations God makes for ſouls in heaven ſpeak their great worth and value. When you lift up your eyes to heaven, and behold that beſpangled azure canopy beſet and inlaid with ſo many golden ſtuds and ſparkling gems, you ſee but the floor or pavement of that place which God hath prepared for ſome ſouls. He furniſhed this world for us before he put us into it; but as delightful and beautiful as it is, it is no more to be compared with the Father's houſe in heaven, than the ſmalleſt ruined chapel your eyes ever beheld, is to be compared with Solomon's temple when it ſtood in all its ſhining glory. When you ſee a ſtately magnificent ſtructure built, richeſt hangings and furniture prepared to adorn it, you conclude ſome great perſons are to come thither; ſuch preparations ſpeak the quality of the gueſts. Now heaven, yea, the heaven of heavens, the palace of the great King, the preſence chamber of the Godhead, is prepared, not only by God's decree and Chriſt's death, but by his aſcenſion thither in our names, and as our forerunner, for all renewed and redeemed ſouls, [John xiv. 2.] 'In my Father's houſe are many man-'ſions; if it were not ſo, I would have told you: I go 'to prepare a place for you.' And where is the place prepared for them, but in his Father's houſe? The ſame place, the very ſame houſe where the Father, Son and Spirit themſelves do dwell. Such is the love of Chriſt to ſouls, that he will not dwell in one houſe, and they in another; but as he ſpeaks, Job xii. 26. 'Where I am, 'there ſhall my ſervant alſo be.' There is room enough in the Father's houſe for Chriſt, and all the ſouls he redeemed, to live and dwell together for evermore. His aſcenſion thither was in the capacity of a common or public perſon, to take livery and ſeiſin of thoſe many manſions for them, which are to be filled with their in-

habitants, as they come thither in their reſpective times and orders.

5. The great price with which they were redeemed and purchaſed, ſpeaks their dignity and value. No wiſe man will purchaſe a trifle at a great price, much leſs the moſt wiſe God. Now the redemption of every ſoul ſtood in no leſs than the moſt precious blood of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: [I. Pet. i. 18, 19.] 'You know (ſaith the apoſtle there) that 'ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and 'gold—but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as a lamb 'without blemiſh or ſpot.' All the gold and ſilver in the world was no ranſom for one ſoul; nay, all the blood of the creatures, had it been ſhed as a ſacrifice to the glory of juſtice, or even the blood which is moſt dear to us, as being derived from our own, I mean the blood of our dear children, even of our firſt-born, the beginning of our ſtrength, which uſually have the ſtrength of affection: I ſay, none of this could purchaſe a pardon for the ſmalleſt ſin that ever any ſoul committed, much leſs was it able to purchaſe the ſoul itſelf, [Micah vi. 6, 7.] Thouſands of rams, and ten thouſand rivers of oil, or our firſt-born, are no ranſom to God for the ſin of the ſoul. It is only the precious blood of Chriſt that is a juſt ranſom or counter-price, as it is called, [Matt xx. 28.] Now who can compute the value of that blood? Such was the worth of the blood of Chriſt, which by the communication of properties is truly ſtiled the blood of God, that one drop of it is above the eſtimations of men and angels; and yet before the ſoul of the meaneſt man or woman in the world could be redeemed, every drop of his blood muſt be ſhed; for no leſs than his death could be a price for our ſouls. Hence then we evidently diſcern an invaluable worth in ſouls. A whole kingdom is taxed when a king is to be ranſomed; the delight and darling of God's ſoul muſt die when our ſouls are to be redeemed, O the worth of ſouls!

6. This evidences the tranſcendent dignity and worth of ſouls, that eternity is ſtamped upon their actions, and theirs only of all the beings in this world: the acts of

ſouls are immortal, as their nature is, whereas the actions of other animals, having neither moral goodneſs nor moral evil in them, paſs away as their beings do. The apoſtle therefore in Gal. vi. 7. compares the actions of men in this world to ſeed ſown, and tells us of everlaſting fruits we ſhall reap from them in the next life: they have the ſame reſpect to a future account that ſeed hath to the harveſt; 'He that ſoweth iniquity ſhall reap vanity,' (i. e.) everlaſting diſappointment and miſery, [Prov. xxii. 8.] and they that now ſow in tears, ſhall then reap in joy, [Pſal. cxxvi. 5.] Every gracious action is the ſeed of joy, and every ſinful action the ſeed of ſorrow; and this makes the great difference betwixt the actions of a rational ſoul, and thoſe done by beaſts: and if it were not ſo, man would then be wholly ſwayed by ſenſe and preſent things, as the beaſts are, and all religion would vaniſh with this diſtinction of actions. Our actions are conſiderable two ways, phyſically and morally;—in the firſt ſenſe they are tranſient, in the laſt permanent. A word is paſt as ſoon as ſpoken, but yet it muſt and will be recalled and brought into the judgement of the great day, [Matt. xii. 36.] Whatever, therefore, a man ſhall ſpeak, think, or do, once ſpoken, thought, or done, it becomes eternal, and abides for ever. Now what is it that puts ſo great a difference betwixt human and brutal actions, but the excellent nature of the reaſonable ſoul? It is this which ſtamps immortality upon human actions, and is at once a clear proof both of the immortality and dignity of the ſoul of man above all other creatures in this world.

7. The contention of both worlds, the ſtrife of heaven and hell about the ſoul of man, ſpeaks it a moſt precious and invaluable treaſure. The ſoul of man is the prize about which heaven and hell contend: the great deſign of heaven is to ſave it, and all the plots of hell to ruin it. Man is a borderer betwixt both kingdoms, he lives here upon the confines of the ſpiritual and material world, and therefore Scaliger fitly calls him, *Utriſque mundi nexus*, one in whom both worlds meets; his body is of the earth, earthly; his ſoul the offſpring of a Deity, heavenly.

venly. It is then no wonder to find ſuch tugging and pulling this way and that way, upward and downward; ſuch ſallies from heaven to reſcue and ſave it, ſuch excurſions from hell to captivate and ruin it. The infinite wiſdom of God hath laid the plot and deſign for its ſalvation by Chriſt in ſo great depth of counſel, that the angels of heaven are aſtoniſhed at it, and deſire to pry into it.—Chriſt, in purſuance of this eternal project, came from heaven profeſſedly to ſeek and ſave loſt ſouls, [Luke xix. 10.] He compares himſelf to a good ſhepherd, who leaveth the ninety-nine to ſeek one loſt ſheep; and having found it, brings it home upon his ſhoulders, rejoicing that he hath found it, [Luke xv. 5.] Hell employs all its ſkill and policy, ſets awork all wiles and ſtratagems to deſtroy and ruin it, [I. Pet. v. 8.] 'Your adverſary the 'devil goeth about as a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he 'may devour.' The ſtrong man armed gets the firſt poſſeſſion of the ſoul, and with all his forces and policies labours to ſecure it as his property, [Luke xi. 21.] Chriſt raiſes all the ſpiritual militia, the very *poſſe cæli*, the powers of heaven, to reſcue it, [II. Cor. x. 4, 5.] And do heaven and earth thus contend, think you, for a thing of nought? No, no, if there were not ſome ſingular and peculiar excellency and worth in man's ſoul, both worlds would never tug and pull at this rate which ſhould win that prize. It was a great argument of the worth and excellency of Homer, that incomparable poet, that ſeven cities contended for the honour of his nativity;—Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Chius, Argos, and Athens, were all at ſtrife about one poor man, who ſhould crown themſelves with the honour of his birth; but when heaven and hell ſhall contend about a ſoul, certainly it much more ſpeaks the dignity of it, than the contention of ſeven cities for one Homer. What are all the wooings, expoſtulations, and paſſionate beſeechings of Chriſt's miniſters? What are all the convictions of conſcience, and ſtrong impreſſions made upon the affections? What are all ſtrokes from heaven upon men in the way of ſin? I ſay, what are all theſe but the tuggings of heaven to draw

ſouls

ſouls out of the ſnares of hell? And what are the helliſh temptations that men feel in their hearts, the alluring objects preſented to their eyes, the enſnaring examples that are ſet round about them, but the tuggings of Satan, if poſſible, to draw the ſouls of men into the ſame condemnation and miſery with himſelf? Would heaven and hell be up in arms, as it were, and ſtrive at this rate for nothing? Thy ſoul, O man, how vilely ſoever thou depreciateſt and ſlighteſt it, is of high eſteem, a rich purchaſe, a creature of nobler rank than thou art aware of. The wiſe merchant knows the value of gold and diamonds, though the ignorant Indian would part with them for glaſs beads and tinſel toys. And this leads us to,

8. The eighth evidence of the invaluable worth of ſouls, which is the joy in heaven, and the rage in hell, for the gain and loſs of the ſoul of man. Chriſt, who came from heaven, and well knew the frame and diſpoſition of the inhabitants of that city, tells us, that 'there is joy 'in the preſence of the angels of God over one ſinner 'that repenteth, [Luke xv. 7. 10.] No ſooner is the heart of a ſinner darted with conviction, broken with ſorrow for ſin, and begins to cry, "Men and brethren, what ſhall I do?" but the news is quickly in heaven, and ſets all the city of God a rejoicing at it, as in the chief city of a kingdom when a young prince is born. We never read that Chriſt laughed in all his time on earth, but we read that he once rejoiced in ſpirit, [Luke x. 21.] and what was the occaſion of that his joy, but the ſucceſs of the goſpel in the ſalvation of the ſouls of men? Now certainly it muſt be ſome great good that ſo affects Chriſt and all his angels in heaven at the ſight of it. The degree of a wiſe man's joy is according to the value of the object thereof. No man that is wiſe will rejoice, and feel his heart leap within him for gladneſs, at a ſmall or common thing. And as there is joy in heaven for the ſaving, ſo certainly there is grief and rage in hell for the loſs of a ſoul. No ſooner had God, by Paul's miniſtry, converted one poor Lydia at Philippi, whither he was called by an immediate expreſs from heaven for that ſervice, but the

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devil put all the city into an uproar, as if an enemy had landed on their coaſt, and raiſed a violent perſecution, which quickly drove him thence, [Acts xvi. 9, 14, 22.] And indeed what are all the fierce and cruel perſecutions of God's faithful miniſters, but ſo many efforts of the rage and malice of hell againſt them, for plucking ſouls as ſo many captives and preys out of his paws? For this he owes them a ſpight, and will be ſure to pay them if ever he gets them at an advantage. But all this joy and grief demonſtrates the high and great value of the prize which is won by heaven, and loſt by hell.

9. The inſtitution of goſpel ordinances, and the appointment of ſo many goſpel offices, purpoſely for the ſaving of ſouls, is no ſmall evidence of their value and eſteem. No man would light and maintain a lamp fed with golden oil, and keep it burning from age to age, if the work to be done by the light of it were not of a very precious and important nature; what elſe are the diſpenſations of the goſpel, but lamps burning with golden oil to light ſouls to heaven? [Zech. iv. 2, 3, 4, and 12, compared:] a magnificent viſion is there preſented to the prophet, viz. a candleſtick of gold, with a bowl or ciſtern upon the top of it, and ſeven ſhafts with ſeven lamps at the ends thereof, all lighted; and that theſe lamps might have a conſtant ſupply of oil, without any acceſſory human help, there are preſented (as growing by the candleſtick) two freſh and green olive trees on each ſide thereof, [ver. 3.] which do empty out of themſelves golden oil, [ver. 12.] naturally dropping and diſtilling it into that bowl, and the two pipes thereof, to feed the lamps continually. Under this ſtately emblem you have a lively repreſentation of the ſpiritual gifts and graces diſtilled by the Spirit into the miniſters of the goſpel, for the uſe and benefit of the church, as you find not only by the angel's expoſition of it here, but by the Spirit's alluſion to it, and accommodation of it in Rev. xi. 3, 4. See herein what price God puts upon the ſalvation of ſouls: goſpel lamps are maintained for their ſakes, not with the ſweat of miniſter's brows, or the expences and waſte of their ſpirits,

rits, but by the precious gifts and graces of God's Spirit continually dropping into them for the uſe and ſervice of ſouls. Theſe miniſterial gifts and graces are Chriſt's aſcenſion-gifts, [Eph. iv. 8.] 'When he aſcended up on 'high, he gave gifts unto men;' and what were the royal gifts of that triumphant day? Why he 'gave ſome 'apoſtles, and ſome prophets, and ſome evangeliſts, and 'ſome paſtors and teachers, for the perfecting of the 'ſaints, for the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying of 'the body of Chriſt.' It is an alluſion to the Roman triumphs, wherein the conqueror did, *ſpargere miſſilia*, ſcatter abroad his treaſures among the people. It is reported of the palm-tree, ſaith one, that when it was firſt planted in Italy, they watered its roots with wine to make it take the better with the ſoil; but God waters our ſouls with what is infinitely more coſtly than wine, he waters them with the heart-blood of Chriſt, and the precious gifts and graces of the Spirit, which certainly he would never do, if they were not of great worth in his eyes. O how many excellent miniſters, who were, as is ſaid of John, burning and ſhining lights in their places and generations, have ſpent themſelves, and how many are there who are willing to ſpend and be ſpent, as Paul was, for the ſalvation of ſouls! God is at great expences for them, and therefore puts a very high value upon them. Now all this reſpects the ſoul of man, that is the object of all miniſterial labours. The ſoul is the ſubject on which God works, and upon which he ſpends all thoſe invaluable treaſures. It is the ſoul which he aims at, and principally deſigns and levels all to, and reckons it not too dear a rate to ſave them at. No man will dig for common ſtones with golden mattocks, the inſtruments that would be worn out, being of far greater value than the thing. This may convince us of what worth our ſouls are, and at what rates they are ſet in God's book, that ſuch inſtruments are ſent abroad into the world, and ſuch precious gifts and graces, like golden oil, ſpent continually for their ſalvation. Whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, all are yours, [I. Cor. iii. 22.] (i. e.) all ſet apart for the ſervice and ſalvation of your ſouls.

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10. The great encouragements and rewards God propounds, and promiſeth to them that win ſouls, ſpeaks their worth, and God's great eſteem for them. There cannot be a more acceptable ſervice done to God, than for a man to ſet himſelf heartily and diligently to the converſion of ſouls: ſo many ſouls as a man inſtrumentally ſaves, ſo many diadems will God crown them withal in the great day. St. Paul calls his converted Philippians his 'joy 'and his crown,' [Phil. iv. 1.] and tells the converted Theſſalonians, they were his crown 'of rejoicing in the 'preſence of Jeſus Chriſt at his coming,' [I. Theſſ. ii. 19.] There is a full reward aſſured by promiſe to thoſe that labour in this great ſervice, [Dan. xii. 3.] 'And they that 'be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament: 'and they that turn many to righteouſneſs, as the ſtars 'for ever and ever.' The wiſdom here ſpoken of I conceive not to be only that whereby a man is made wiſe to the ſalvation of his own ſoul, but whereby he is alſo furniſhed with ſkill for the ſaving of other men's ſouls, according to that, [Prov. xi. 30.] 'He that winneth ſouls 'is wiſe.' And ſo the latter phraſe is exegetical of it, meaning one and the ſame thing by being wiſe, and turning many unto righteouſneſs: and to put men upon the ſtudy of this wiſdom, he puts a very honourable title upon them, calling them מצדיקי הרבים 'the juſtifiers of many,' as in I. Tim. iv. 16. they are ſaid to ſave others. Here is ſingular honour put upon the very inſtruments employed in this honourable ſervice; and that is not all, but their reward is great hereafter, as well as their honour great at preſent; they ſhall 'ſhine as the brightneſs of 'the firmament, and the ſtars for ever and ever.' The firmament ſhines like a ſaphir in itſelf, the ſtars and planets more gloriouſly again; but thoſe that faithfully labour in this work of ſaving ſouls, ſhall ſhine in glory for ever and ever, when the firmament ſhall be parched up as a ſcrowl. O what rewards and honours are here to provoke men to the ſtudy of ſaving ſouls! God will richly recompenſe all our pains in this work: if we did but only ſow the ſeed in our days, and another enters into our la-

bours, and waters what we ſowed, ſo that neither the firſt hath the comfort of finiſhing the work, nor the laſt the honour of beginning it; but one did ſomewhat towards it in the work of conviction, and the other carried it on to greater maturity and perfection, and ſo neither the one or other began and finiſhed the work ſingly; yet both ſhall rejoice in heaven together, [John iv. 36.]

You ſee what honours God puts upon the very inſtruments employed in this work, even the honour to be ſaviours under God of men's ſouls, [James v. 20.] and what a full reward of glory, joy, and comfort they ſhall have in heaven; all which ſpeaks the great value of the ſoul with God. Such encouragements and ſuch rewards would never have been propounded and promiſed, if God had not a ſingular eſtimation of them. And the more to quicken his inſtruments to all diligence in this great work, he wo ks upon their fears as well as hopes; threatens them with hell, as well as encourages them in the hopes of heaven; tells them he will require the blood of all thoſe ſouls that periſh by their negligence; 'Their blood (ſaith he) will I require 'at the watchman's hands,' [Ezek. xxxiii. 6.] which are rather thunder bolts than words, ſaith Chryſoſtom. By all which you ſee what weight God lays upon the ſaving or loſing of ſouls: ſuch ſevere charges, great encouragements, and terrible threats, had never been propounded in ſcripture, if the ſouls of men had not been invaluably precious.

11. It is no ſmall evidence of the precious and invaluable worth of ſouls, that God manifeſts ſo great and tender care over them, and is ſo concerned about the evil that befals them. Among many others, there are two things in which the tender care of God for the good of ſouls is manifeſted. (1.) In his tenderneſs over them in times of diſtreſs and danger: as a tender father will not leave his ſick child in other hands, but ſits up and watches by him himſelf, and adminiſters the cordials with his own hands; even ſo the great God expreſſeth his care and tenderneſs, [Iſa. lvii. 15.] 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with 'him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to re-

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'vive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the hearts of 'the contrite ones.' Behold the condeſcending tenderneſs of the higheſt Majeſty! Is a ſoul ready to faint and fail, O how ſoon is God with it, with a reviving cordial in his hand, leſt the ſpirit ſhould fail before him, and the ſoul which he hath made? As it is ver. 16. yea, he put it into Chriſt's commiſſion to preach good tidings to the meek, and to bind up the broken-hearted, [Iſa. lxi. 1.] and not only inſerts it in Chriſt's commiſſion, but gives the ſame in ſolemn charge to all his inferior meſſengers whom he employs about them, [Iſa. xxxv. 3.] 'Strengthen 'ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; ſay 'to them that are of a fearful heart, be ſtrong, fear not.' (2.) His ſpecial regard to ſouls is evidenced in his ſevere prohibitions to all others to do nothing that may be an occaſion of ruin to them. He charges it upon all 'That 'no man put a ſtumbling-block, or an occaſion to fall, in 'his brother's way,' [Rom. xiv. 13.] that by the abuſe of our own liberty, 'we deſtroy not him for whom Chriſt 'died,' [Rom. xiv. 15.] And what doth all this ſignify, but the precious and invaluable worth of ſouls?

12. Laſtly, It is not the leaſt evidence of the dignity of men's ſouls, that God hath appointed the whole hoſt of angels to be their guardians and attendants. 'Are they 'not all miniſtering ſpirits ſent forth to miniſter for them 'who ſhall be the heirs of ſalvation?' [Heb. i. 14.]

Are they not?] It is no doubtful queſtion, but the ſtrongeſt way of affirmation; nothing is ſurer than that they are

All.] Not one of that heavenly company excepted. The higheſt angel thinks it no diſparagement to ſerve a ſoul for whom Chriſt died. Well may they all ſtoop to ſerve them, when they ſee Chriſt their Lord hath ſtooped even to death to ſave them. They are all of them

Miniſtring ſpirits.] Public officers to whom their tutelage is committed; to them it belongs to attend, ſerve, protect, and relieve them. The greateſt peers and barons in the kingdom think it not below them to wait upon the

heir apparent to the crown in his minority, and no leſs dignity is here ſtamped by God upon the ſouls of men, whom he calls

Heirs of ſalvation,] And in ſome reſpect nearer to Chriſt than themſelves are; on this account it is that the angels delight to ſerve them. Chriſt's little ones upon earth have their angels, which always behold the face of God in heaven, [Matt. xviii. 10.] and therefore ſaith our Lord there, 'Take heed, you deſpiſe not one of theſe little ones;' they are greater perſons than you are aware of. Nor is it enough that one angel is appointed to wait upon all or many of them, but many angels, even a whole hoſt of them, are ſometimes ſent to attend upon one of them: As Jacob was going on his way, the angels of God met him; and when he ſaw them, he ſaid, 'This is God's 'hoſt, [Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.] The ſame two offices which belong to a nurſe, to whom the father commits his child, belong alſo to the angels of heaven, with reſpect to the children of God, viz. to keep them tenderly while they are abroad, and bring them home to their Father's houſe at laſt. And how clearly doth all this evince and demonſtrate the great dignity and value of ſouls? Was it an argument of the grandeur and magnificence of King Solomon, that he had two hundred men with targets, and three hundred men with ſhields of beaten gold for his ordinary guard every day? And is it not a mark of far greater dignity than ever Solomon had in all his glory, to have hoſts of angels attending us? In compariſon with one of this guard, Solomon himſelf was but a worm in all his magnificence.

And now lay all theſe arguments together, and ſee what they will amount to. You have before you no ordinary creature; for, (1.) It was not produced as other creatures were, by a mere word of command, but by the deliberation of the great council of heaven: and, (2.) Such are the high and noble faculties and powers found in it, as render it agreeable to, and becoming ſuch a divine original: yea, (3.) By reaſon of theſe its admirable powers, it becomes a capable ſubject both of grace here, and glory

glory hereafter. (4.) Nor is this its capacity in vain; for God hath made glorious preparations for ſome of them in heaven. (5.) And purchaſed them for heaven, and heaven for them at an invaluable price, even the precious blood of Chriſt. (6.) And ſtamped immortality upon their actions as well as natures. (7.) Both worlds contend and ſtrive for the ſoul as a prize of greateſt value. (8.) Their converſion to Chriſt is the triumph of heaven, and rage of hell. (9.) The lamps of goſpel-ordinances are maintained over all the reformed Chriſtian world to light them in their paſſage to heaven. (10.) Great rewards are propounded to all that ſhall heartily endeavour the ſalvation of them. (11.) The care of heaven is exceeding great and tender over them: and, (12.) The heavenly hoſt of angels have the charge of them, and reckon it their honour to ſerve them. Theſe things duly weighed, bring home the concluſion with demonſtrative clearneſs to every man's underſtanding, "That one ſoul is of more value than the whole world," which was the thing to be proved. What remains is the improvement of this excellent ſubject in theſe following inferences.

Inf. I. The ſoul of man being a creature of ſuch tranſcendant dignity and excellency, this truth appears of equal clearneſs with it, *That it was not made for the body, but the body for it; and therefore it is a vile abuſe of the noble and high-born ſoul, to ſubject it to the luſts, and enſlave it to the drudgery of the inferiour and more ignoble part.*

The very law of nature aſſigns the moſt honourable places and employments to the moſt noble and excellent creatures, and the baſer and inferior to things of the loweſt rank and quality. The ſun, moon, and ſtars are placed by this law in the heavens; but the *ignis fatuus* and the glow-worm in the fens and ditches. Princes are ſet upon thrones of glory, the beggars lodged in barns and ſtables: and if at any time this order of nature be inverted, and the baſer ſuppreſs and perk over the more noble and honourable beings, it is looked upon as a kind

of prodigy in the civil world; and ſo Solomon repreſents it, [Eccleſ. x. 7.] 'I have ſeen ſervants upon horſes, 'and princes walking as ſervants upon the earth,' (i. e.) I have ſeen men that are worthy of no better employments than to rub horſes heels, in the ſaddle with their trapping; and men who deſerve to bear rule, and to govern kingdoms, men who for their great ability and integrity deſerved to ſit at the helm, and moderate the affairs of the kingdoms, theſe have I ſeen walking as ſervants upon the earth; and this he calls an evil under the ſun, that is an ataxy, confuſion or diſorder in the courſe of nature. Now there can never be that difference and vaſt odds betwixt one man and another, as there is betwixt the ſoul and the body of every man. A king upon the throne is not ſo much above a beggar that cries at our doors for a cruſt, as the ſoul is above a body: for the ſoul of a beggar is of the ſame ſpecies, original, and capacity of happineſs with the ſoul of the moſt illuſtrious prince; and ſometimes greater excellencies of mind are found in the loweſt rank and order of men: 'Better is a 'poor and wiſe child than an old and fooliſh king,' [Eccleſ. iv. 13.] But the ſoul of the meaneſt perſon in the world is better than all the bodies in it; and therefore to make the noble and high-born ſoul a ſlave, a mere drudge to the vile body, as the apoſtle calls it, Phil. iii. 21. 'The 'body of this vileneſs;' what is it but to ſet the beggar on horſeback, and make the king lacquey after him on foot? It was a generous reſentment that a heathen had of the dignity of his own ſoul, and a very juſt abhorrence of ſo vile an abuſe of it, when he ſaid, "I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I ſhould be a ſlave to my body."

I know there is a debt of duty the ſoul owes to its own body, and few ſouls are to be found too careleſs or dilatory in the diſcharge thereof: where one ſoul needs the ſpur in this caſe, thouſands need the curb. Moſt ſouls are over-heated with zeal for the concerns of the fleſh, worn out and ſpent in its conſtant drudgery: their whole life

life is but a 'ſerving of divers luſts and pleaſures,' as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Tit. iii. 3. Imperious luſts are cruel taſk-maſters, they give the ſoul no reſt; the more proviſion the ſoul brings in to ſatisfy them, the more they rage, like fire by the addition of more fuel. What a ſad ſight is it to ſee a noble immortal ſoul enſlaved, as the apoſtle's word is, Tit. i. 7. 'to wine?' to filthy lucre, to a thouſand ſorts of vaſſalage; like a tapſter in a common inn, now running up ſtairs, and then down, at every one's knock and call. O what perpetual hurry and noiſe do thouſands of ſouls live in! So that they have no time to retire into themſelves and think for what end and uſe they were created, and ſent into this world: all their thoughts, all their cares, all their ſtudies and labours are taken up about that periſhing, clogging, enſnaring body, which muſt ſo ſhortly fall a prey to the worms. How many millions of poor creatures are there that labour and toil all their life long for a poor, bare maintenance of their bodies, and never think they have any other buſineſs to do in this world? And how many of a higher rank are charmed by a thick ſucceſſion of fleſhly delights and pleaſures in a deep oblivion of their eternal concerns? So that their whole life is but one entire diverſion from the great buſineſs and proper end of it: [Jam. v. 5.] 'Ye have 'lived in pleaſure on earth,' lived in them, as the fiſh doth in the water, its proper element, or the eel in the mud. Sometimes it falls out at the very cloſe of a vain voluptuous life, when they ſee all their delights ſhrinking away at the approaches and appearance of death, that they begin to be a little ſtartled at the change which is about to be made upon them, and to cry, O what ſhall we do now! Ah poor ſouls! Is that a time to think what you ſhall do, when you are juſt ſtepping into the awful ſtate of eternity? O that this had been thought on in ſeaſon! but you could find no leiſure for one ſuch thought. Now you begin to wiſh time had been reſcued out of the hands of the cares and pleaſures of this life for better purpoſes; but it is gone, and never more to be recalled.

Inf.

Inf. II. *Is the ſoul ſo invaluably precious? Then the ſalvation of the ſoul is to be the great care and buſineſs of every man in this life.*

Where one thought is ſpent about this queſtion, what ſhall I eat, drink, and put on? a thouſand ſhould be ſpent about that queſtion, 'What ſhall I do to be ſaved?' If a treaſure of ten or twenty thouſand pounds were committed to your truſt and charge, and for which, (in caſe of loſs) you muſt be reſponſible, would not your thoughts, cares, and fears be working night and day about it, till you be ſatisfied it is ſafe and out of danger? And then your mind would be at reſt, but not before. Thy ſoul, O man, is more worth than the crowns and treaſures of all the princes in the world. If all their exchequers were drained, and all their crown-jewels ſold to their full value, they could never make up half a ranſom for the ſoul of the pooreſt and meaneſt man. This invaluable treaſure is committed to your charge; if it be loſt, you are loſt for ever. That which St. Matthew calls the loſing of the ſoul in my text, St. Luke calls 'loſing himſelf:' If the ſoul be loſt, the man is loſt; the body is but as a boat faſtened to the ſtern of a ſtately ſhip; if the ſhip ſink, the boat follows it. O therefore what thoughts, what fears, what cares ſhould exerciſe the minds of men day and night, till their precious ſouls be out of all danger! Methinks the ſound of this text ſhould ring a perpetual alarm in the ears of careleſs ſinners, and make them haſten to the inſurance office, as merchants do, who have great adventures in danger at ſea. It was counſel given once to a king, and worthy to be preſſed upon all, from the king to the beggar, to ruminate theſe words of Chriſt one quarter of an hour every day, "What is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?" Certainly it would make men ſlack their pace, and cool themſelves in their hot and earneſt purſuit of the trifles of this world, and convince them, that they have ſomewhat elſe to do of far greater importance.

It

It was not without great and weighty reaſon, therefore, that the apoſtle Peter exhorts to all diligence to make our calling and election ſure. [II. Pet. i. 10.] There are two words in this text of extraordinary weight, 'Give all 'diligence,' the word is ſtudy; the utmoſt intention of the mind, pondering and comparing things in the thoughts, valuing reaſons for, and objections againſt the point before us, this is ſtudy; and ſuch as calls all diligence where the ſubject matter is (as to be ſure here it is) of the greateſt importance: and what is the ſubject matter of all this ſtudy and diligence? Why, it is the moſt ſolemn of all works that ever came under the hand of man, to make our calling and election ſure, firm, ſtable, or fixed, as a building raiſed upon ſquare and ſtrong foundation; or as a concluſion is ſure, when regularly drawn from certain and indubitable premiſes; there can never be too much care, too much ſtudy or pains, about that which can never be too well ſecured. Many ſouls never ſpent one ſolemn hour in a cloſe and ſerious debate about this matter; others have taken a great deal of pains about it, they have broken many nights ſleep, poured out many prayers, made many a deep ſearch into their own hearts, walked with much conſciencious watchfulneſs and tenderneſs, propoſed many a ſerious caſe of conſcience to the moſt judicious and ſkilful miniſters and Chriſtians; and after all, their ſecurity is not ſuch as fully ſatisfies; and probably one reaſon of it may be the great weight wherewith the matters of their ſalvation lie upon their ſpirits. O that theſe ſoul concerns did bear upon all, as they do upon ſome; it requires more time, more thoughts, more prayers to make theſe things ſure, than moſt are aware of.

Inf. III. *If the ſoul be ſo precious, then certainly it is the ſpecial care of heaven, that which God looks more particularly after, than any other creature on earth.*

There is an active vigilant providence that ſuperintends every creature upon earth: there is not the moſt deſpicable diminutive creature that lives in the world, left withont the line of providence. God is therefore ſaid to give them all their meat in due ſeaſon, and for that end they all wait

upon him, [Pſal. civ. 27.] as a great and provident houſe-keeper orders daily convenient proviſions for all his family, even to the leaſt and loweſt among them: the ſmalleſt inſects and gnats which ſwarm ſo thick in the air, and of the uſefulneſs of whoſe being it is hard to give an account; yet, as the incomparably learned Dr. More well obſerves, theſe all find nouriſhment in the world, which would be loſt if they did not, and are again convenient nouriſhment themſelves to others that prey upon them. But man is the peculiar, ſpecial care of God, and the ſoul of man much more than the body. Hence Chriſt fortifies the faith of Chriſtians againſt all diſtruſt of divine Providence, even from their excellency above other creatures: [Matth. x. 31.] 'Ye are more value than many ſparrows:' [and Matth. vi. 26.] 'Your heavenly Father feeds the fowls 'of the air, and are ye not much better than they?' And ver. 30. 'He cloaths the graſs of the field, and ſhall he 'not much more cloath you?' And ſo the apoſtle, I. Cor. ix. 9. 'Doth God take care for oxen? Or ſaith he it alto-'gether for our ſakes?' For our ſakes no doubt this is written. In all which places the dignity of man above all animals and vegetables, in reſpect of the natural excellency of his reaſonable ſoul, but eſpecially the gracious endowments of it, which endear it far more to its Maker; this is the very hinge of the argument, and a firm ground for the believer's faith of God's tender care over both parts, but eſpecially the ſoul. The body of a believer is God's creature as well as his ſoul; but that being of leſs value, hath not ſuch a degree of care and tenderneſs expreſſed towards it, as the ſoul hath: the father's care is not ſo much for the child's cloaths, as it is for the child himſelf. Beſides, the immediate wants and troubles of the ſoul, which are idiopathetical, are far more ſharp and pinching than thoſe it ſuffers upon the body's account, which are but ſympathetical; and therefore whenever ſuch an excellent creature as a ſanctified ſoul, which is in Chriſt, or a ſoul deſigned to be ſanctified, which is moving towards Chriſt, falls under thoſe heavy preſſures and diſtreſſes (as it often does) and is ready to fail; let it be aſſured its merciful

Creator

Creator will not fail to relieve, ſupport, revive, and deliver it as often as it ſhall fall into thoſe deep diſtreſſes.

Hear how his compaſſionate tenderneſs is expreſſed towards diſtreſſed ſouls, Iſa. xlix. 15. 'Can a woman for-'get her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſ-'ſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet 'will not I forget thee.' Sooner ſhall a woman, the more tender ſex, forget (not the nurſe-child that only ſucks her breaſt, but) the child, yea, the ſon of her womb, and that not when grown and placed abroad, but whilſt it hangs upon her breaſt, and draws love from her heart, as well as milk from her breaſt, than God will forget a ſoul that fears him. Let gracious ſouls fortify their faith therefore in the divine care, by conſidering with what a peculiar eye of eſtimation and care God looks upon them above all other creatures in the world: only beware you ſo eye not the natural or ſpiritual excellencies of your ſouls, as to expect mercy for the ſake thereof, as if your ſouls were worthy for whoſe ſake God ſhould do this: no, no, ſin hath nonſuited that plea, all is of free grace, not of debt; but he minds us what reputation the new creation brings the ſoul into with its God.

Inf. IV. *If the ſoul of man be ſo precious, how precious and dear to all believers ſhould the Redeemer and Saviour of their precious ſouls be?*

'Unto you therefore that believe, he is precious,' ſaith the apoſtle, I Pet. ii. 7. though he be yet out of our ſight, he ſhould never be one whole hour together out of our hearts and thoughts: [I Pet. i. 8.] 'Whom having 'not ſeen ye love; whom though now ye ſee him not, 'yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable and full 'of glory.' The very name of Chriſt, ſaith Bernard, is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, and a very jubilee in the heart. The bleſſed martyr Mr. Lambert made this his motto, "None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt." Molinus was ſeldom obſerved to mention his name without dropping eyes. Julius Palmer in the midſt of the flames moved his ſcorched lips, and was heard to ſay,

ſweet Jeſus, and fell aſleep. Paul faſtens upon his name as a bee upon a ſweet flower, and mentions it no leſs than ten times in the compaſs of ten verſes, [1. Cor. i.] as if he knew not how to leave it.

There is a twofold precioufneſs of Chriſt; one in reſpect of his eſſential excellency and glory; in this reſpect he is glorious as the only begotten Son of God, the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image or character of his perſon, [Heb. i.] the other is in reſpect of his relative uſefulneſs and ſuitableneſs to all the needs and wants of poor ſinners; as he is the Lord our righteouſneſs, made unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption. None diſcern this precioufneſs of Chriſt, but thoſe that have been convinced of ſin, and have apprehended the wrath to come, the juſt demerit of ſin, and fled for refuge to the hope ſet before them; and to them he is precious indeed. Conſider him as a Saviour from wrath to come, and he will appear the moſt lovely and deſirable in all the world to your ſouls: he that underſtands the value of his own ſoul, the dreadful nature of the wrath of God, the near approaches of the wrath to his own ſoul, and the aſtoniſhing love of Chriſt in delivering him from it, by bearing that wrath in his place and room in his own perſon, cannot chuſe but eſtimate Chriſt above ten thouſand worlds.

Inf. V. *How great a truſt and charge lieth upon them to whom the care of ſouls is committed, and from whom an account for other men's, as well as their own ſouls, ſhall certainly be required?*

Miniſters are appointed of God to watch for the ſouls of their people, and that as men that muſt give an account, [Heb. xiii. 17.] The word here tranſlated watch, ſignifies ſuch watchfulneſs as that of ſhepherds, who keep their flocks by night in places infeſted by wolves, and watch whole nights together for their ſafety. If a man were a keeper only of ſheep or ſwine, it were no great matter if the wolf now and then carried away one whilſt he ſlept; but miniſters have charge of ſouls, one of which, as Chriſt aſſures us in the text, is more worth

than the whole world. Hear what one ſpeaks upon this point; "God purchaſed the church with his own blood: O what an argument is here to quicken the negligent! And what an argument to condemn thoſe that will not be quickened up to their duty by it! O, ſaith one of the ancient doctors, if Chriſt had but committed to my keeping one ſpoonful of his blood in a fragil glaſs, how curiouſly ſhould I preſerve it, and how tender ſhould I be of that glaſs! If then he have committed to me the purchaſe of that blood, ſhould I not carefully look to my charge? What, Sirs, ſhall we deſpiſe the blood of Chriſt? Shall we think it was ſhed for them that are not worthy of our care? O then let us hear thoſe arguments of Chriſt whenever we feel ourſelves grow dull and careleſs! Did I die for them, and wilt not thou look after them? Were they worth my blood, and are they not worth thy labour? Did I come down from heaven to earth, to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt; and wilt not thou go to the next door, or ſtreet, or village to ſeek them? How ſmall is thy labour or condeſcenſion to mine? I debaſed myſelf to this, but it is thy honour to be ſo employed. Let not that man think to be ſaved by the blood of Chriſt himſelf, that makes light of precious ſouls, who are the purchaſe of that blood. And no leſs charge lieth upon parents, to whom God hath committed the care of their children's ſouls; and maſters that have the guardianſhip of the ſouls as well as bodies of their families. The command is laid immediately upon you, that they ſanctify God's ſabbaths, [Exod. xx. 10.] to command your houſhold in the way of the Lord, [Gen. xviii. 19.]

O parents, conſider with yourſelves what ſtrong engagements lie upon you to do all you are capable of doing for the ſalvation of the precious ſouls of your dear children! Remember, their ſouls are infinitely of more value than their bodies; that they came into the world under ſin and condemnation; that you were the inſtruments of propagating that ſin to them, and bring-

ing

ing them into that miſery; that you know their diſpoſitions, and how to ſuit them better than others can; that the bonds of nature give you ſingular advantages to prevail, and be ſucceſsful in your exhortations beyond what any others have; that you are always with them, and can chuſe your opportunities, which others cannot; that you and they muſt ſhortly part, and never meet again, till you meet at the judgement-ſeat of Chriſt; that it will be unconceivably dreadful to ſee them ſtand at Chriſt's left hand among the curſed and condemned there, curſing the day that ever they were born of ſuch ignorant and negligent, ſuch careleſs and cruel parents, as took no care to inſtruct, reprove, or exhort them. O who can think without horror of the cries and curſes of his own child in hell, caſt away by the very inſtrument of its being! Is this the love you bear them, to betray them to eternal miſery? Was there no other proviſion to be made, but for their bodies? Did you think you had fully acquitted your duty when you had got an eſtate for them? O that God would effectually touch your hearts with a becoming ſenſe of the value and danger of their ſouls, and your own too, in the neglect of that great and ſolemn truſt committed to you with reſpect to them. And you maſters, conſider, though God hath ſet you above, and your ſervants below, yet are their ſouls equally precious with yours; they have another maſter that expects ſervice from them, as well as you. Do not only allow them time, but give them your exhortations and commands, not to neglect their own ſouls, whilſt they attend your buſineſs: think not your buſineſs will proſper the leſs, becauſe it is in the hand of a praying ſervant; their ſouls are of greater concernment than any buſineſs of yours can be.

Inf. VI. *Are ſouls ſo precious? then certainly the means and inſtruments of their ſalvation muſt be exceeding precious too, and the removal of them a ſore judgement.*

The dignity of the ſubject gives value to the inſtruments employed about it. It is no ordinary mercy for ſouls to come into ſuch a part of the world, and in ſuch a time as furniſheth them with the beſt helps for ſalvation.

Ordinances

Ordinances and miniſters receive their value not only from their author, but their object: they have a dignity ſtamped upon them by their uſefulneſs to the ſouls of men, [Acts xx. 32.] it is the ſeed of life, [I. Pet. i. 23.] the regenerating inſtrument. It is the bread of life; and Job xxiii. 12. more than our neceſſary food. The word is a light ſhining in the dark world, to direct our ſouls through all the ſnares laid for them unto glory. It is the ſoul's cordial in all fainting fits, [Pſal. cxix. 50.] What ſhall I ſay of the word and ordinances of God, the ſun that ſhines in heaven to give us light? The fountains, ſprings, and rivers that ſtream for our refreſhment, the corn and cattle on the earth, yea, the very air we breathe in, is not ſo uſeful, ſo neceſſary, ſo precious to our bodies as the word is to our ſouls.

It cannot, therefore, but be a ſore judgement, and a dreadful token of God's indignation and wrath, to have a reſtraint or ſcarcity of the means of ſalvation among us; but ſhould there be (which God in mercy prevent) a removal and total loſs of theſe things, wrath would then come upon us to the uttermoſt. What will the condition of precious ſouls be, when the means of ſalvation are cut off from them? When that famine, worſe than of bread and water, is come upon them? [Amos viii. 11.] When the ark of God (the ſymbol of his preſence) was taken, it is ſaid, [I Sam. iv. 13.] 'That all the city 'cried out.' When Paul took his leave of Antioch, and told them they ſhould ſee his face no more, how did the poor Chriſtians lament and mourn, as cut at the heart by that killing word? [Acts xx. 37, 38.] It made Chriſt's bowels to yern and roll within him, when he ſaw the multitude ſcattered as ſheep having no ſhepherd, [Matt. ix. 36.] Matthew Paris tells us, in the year 1072, when preaching was ſuppreſt at Rome, letters were framed as coming from hell, wherein the devil gave them thanks for the multitude of ſouls ſent to him that year: but we need no letters from hell, we have a ſad account from heaven, in what a ſad ſtate thoſe ſouls are left, from whom the means of ſalvation are cut off; 'where no

'viſion

'viſion is, the people periſh,' [Prov. xxix. 18. and Hoſea iv. 6.] 'My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge.' It is ſad when thoſe ſtars that guide ſouls to Chriſt, (as that which the wiſe men ſaw did) are ſet, and wandering ſtars ſhall ſhine in their places. O if gold remove the golden candleſtick out of its place, what but the deſolation and ruin of millions of ſouls muſt follow! We account it inſufferable cruelty for a man to undertake the piloting of a ſhip full of paſſengers, who never learnt his compaſs; or an ignorant empiric to get his living by killing men's bodies; but much more lamentable will the ſtate of ſouls be, if ever they fall (which God in mercy prevent) into the hands of popiſh guides, or blind leaders of the blind.

Inf. VII. *If the ſoul be of ſo precious a nature, it can never live upon ſuch baſe and vile food as earthly things are.*

The apoſtle, Phil. iii. 8, 9. calls the things of this world 'dogs meat,' and judge if that be proper food for ſuch noble and high-born creatures as our ſouls are. An immaterial being can never live upon material things; they are no bread for ſouls, as the prophet ſpeaks, Iſa. lv. 2. 'Why do ye ſpend money (i. e.) time and pains, thoughts and cares) for that which is not bread?' Your ſouls can no more live upon carnal, than your bodies on ſpiritual things. Earthly things have a double defect in them, by reaſon whereof they are called things of nought, [Amos vi. 13.] of no worth or value: they are neither ſuitable nor durable, and therefore in the ſoul's eye not valuable.

1. They are not ſuitable. What are corn and wine, gold and ſilver, pleaſures and honours to the ſoul? The body and bodily ſenſes can find ſomewhat of refreſhment in them, but not the ſpirit: that which is bread to the body, affords no more nouriſhment to the ſoul than wind or aſhes, [Iſa. xliv. 20.] 'He feedeth of aſhes.' Aſhes are that light and dry matter into which fuel is reduced by the fire: the fuel before it was burnt, had nothing in it fit for nouriſhment; or if the ſap or juice that was in it might in any reſpect be uſeful that way, yet all that is devoured

devoured and licked up by the fire, and not the leaſt nutriment left in the aſhes; and ſuch are all earthly things to the ſoul of man; I am the bread of life, ſaith Chriſt. A ſoul can feed and feaſt itſelf upon Chriſt and the promiſes, theſe are things full of marrow and fatneſs, ſubſtantial and proper ſoul nutriment.

2. As earthly things are no way ſuitable to the ſoul, ſo neither are they durable. The apoſtle reduceth all earthly things to three heads; the luſt of the eye, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life, [I. John ii. 16.] he calls them all by the name of that which gives the luſtre and beauty to them, and pronounceth them all fading, tranſitory vanities, they all paſs away; as time, ſo theſe things that are meaſured by time, are *in fluxu continuo*, always going, and at laſt will be all gone. Now the ſoul being of an immortal nature, and theſe things of a periſhing nature, it muſt neceſſarily and unavoidably follow, that the ſoul muſt overlive them all; and if it will do ſo, what a diſmal caſe are thoſe ſouls in, for whom no other proviſion is made, but that on which it cannot ſubſiſt whilſt it hath them, no more than the body can upon aſhes or wind! And if it could, yet they will ſhortly fail it, and paſs away for ever. So then it is beyond debate, that there lies a plain neceſſity upon every man to make proviſion in time of things more ſuitable and durable than earthly treaſures are, or the ſoul muſt periſh as to its comfort to all eternity. Hence is that weighty counſel of him that came to ſave them, [Luke xii. 23.] 'Provide yourſelves 'bags that wax not old, a treaſure in heaven that faileth 'not,' (i.e.) a happineſs which will laſt as long as your ſouls laſt. Certainly the moth-eaten things of this world are no proviſion for immortal ſpirits, and yet multitudes think of no other proviſion for them, but live as if they had nothing to do in this world but to get an eſtate. Alas! what are all theſe things to the ſoul? They ſignify ſomewhat indeed to the body, and that but for a little time; for after the reſurrection the bodies of the ſaints become ſpiritual in their qualities, and no more need theſe material things than the angels do; it is madneſs therefore to be ſo intent upon cares for the body, as to neglect the ſoul; but to ruin the

ſoul, and drown it in perdition for the ſake of theſe proviſions for the fleſh, is the height of madneſs.

Inf. VIII. *If the ſoul be ſo invaluably precious, then it is a rational and well-adviſed reſolution and practice to expoſe all other things to hazard, yea, to certain loſs, for the preſervation of the more precious ſoul.*

It is better our bodies and all their comforts ſhould periſh, than our ſouls ſhould periſh for their ſakes. Nature teaches us to offer a hand or arm to the ſtroke of a ſword, to ſave a blow from the head, or put by a thruſt at the heart. It is recorded, to the praiſe of thoſe three worthies, [Dan. iii. 28.] 'That they yielded their bodies, 'that they might not ſerve nor worſhip any God, except 'their own God. By this rule all the martyrs of Chriſt governed themſelves, ſtill ſlighting and expoſing to ruin their bodies and eſtates to preſerve their ſouls, reckoning to ſave nothing by religion but their ſouls, and that they had loſt nothing if they could ſave them; 'They loved 'not their lives unto the death,' [Rev. xii. 11.] Then do we live like Chriſtians, when the care of our bodies is ſwallowed up, and ſubdued by that of our ſouls, and all creature-loves by the love of Chriſt. Thoſe bleſſed ſouls hated their own bodies, and counted them their enemies, when they would draw them from Chriſt and his truths, and plunge their ſouls into guilt and danger. This was the reſult of all their debates with the fleſh in the hour of temptation; cannot we live but to the diſhonour of Chriſt, and ruin of our own ſouls, by ſinful compliance againſt our conſciences? Then welcome the worſt of deaths rather than ſuch a life. Look into the ſtories of the martyrs, and you ſhall find this was the rule they ſtill governed themſelves by; a dungeon, a ſtake, a gibbet, any thing rather than guilt upon the inner man; death was welcome even in its moſt dreadful form, to eſcape ruin to their precious and immortal ſouls. One kiſſed the apparitor that brought him the tidings of his death. Another being adviſed, when he came to the critical point on which his life depended, to have a care of himſelf; ſo I will, ſaid he, I will be as careful as I can of my beſt ſelf, my ſoul.

Theſe

Theſe men underſtood the value and precious worth of their own ſouls; and certainly we ſhall never prove courageous and conſtant in ſufferings, till we underſtand the worth of our ſouls, as they did. Conſider and compare theſe ſufferings in a few obvious particulars, and then determine the matter in thine own breaſt.

(1.) How much eaſier it is to endure the torments of men in our bodies, than to feel the terrors of God in our conſciences. Can the creature ſtrike with an arm like God? O think what it is for the wrath of God to come into a man's bowels like water, and like oil into his bones, as the expreſſion is, Pſal. cix. 18. Sure there is no compare betwixt the ſtrokes of God and men. (2.) The ſufferings of the body are but for a moment. When the proconſul told Polycarp that he would tame him with fire, he replied, your fire ſhall burn but for the ſpace of an hour, and then it ſhall be extinguiſhed; but the fire that ſhall devour the wicked will never be quenched; the ſufferings of a moment are nothing to eternal ſufferings. (3.) Sufferings for Chriſt are uſually ſweetened and made eaſy by the conſolations of the Spirit; but hell-torments have no relief, they admit of no eaſe. (4.) The life you ſhall live in that body, for whoſe ſake you have damned your ſouls, will not be worth the having; it will be a life without comfort, light or joy; and what is there in life ſeparate from the joy and comfort of life? (5.) In a word, if you ſacrifice your bodies for God and your ſouls, freely offer them up in love to Chriſt and his truth, your ſouls will joyfully receive and meet them again at the reſurrection of the juſt; but if your poor ſouls be now enſnared and deſtroyed by their fond indulgence to their bodies, you will leave them at death deſpairing, and meet them at the reſurrection howling.

Inf. IX. To conclude, *If the ſoul be ſo invaluably precious, how great and irreparable a loſs muſt the loſs of a ſoul to all eternity be!*

There is a double loſs of the ſoul of man, the one in Adam, which loſs is recoverable by Chriſt; the other by final impenitence and unbelief, cutting it off from Chriſt;

and this is irreparable and irrecoverable. Souls loſt by Adam's ſin are within the reach of the arms of Chriſt; but in the ſhipwreck of perſonal infidelity there is no plank to ſave the ſoul ſo caſt away: of all loſſes this is the moſt lamentable, yet what more common? O what a ſhriek doth the unregenerate ſoul make, when it ſees whereto it muſt go, and that there is no remedy! Three cries are dreadful to hear on earth, yet all three are drowned by a more terrible cry in the other world; the cry of a condemned priſoner at the bar, the cry of drowning ſeamen and paſſengers in a ſhipwreck, the cries of ſoldiers conquered in the field; all theſe are fearful cries, yet nothing to that of a ſoul caſt away to all eternity, and loſt in the depth of hell. If a man, as Chryſoſtom well obſerves, loſe an eye, an arm, a hand or leg, it is a great loſs; but yet if one be loſt, there is another to help him: For *omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, God hath given us all thoſe members double; *animam verò unam*, but we have but one ſoul, and if that be damned, there is no other to be ſaved. And it is no ſmall aggravation to this loſs, that it was a wilful loſs. We had the offers and means of ſalvation plentifully afforded us; we were warned of this danger over and over; we were entreated and beſeeched upon the knee of importunity, not to throw away our ſouls by an obſtinate rejection of Chriſt and grace; we ſaw the diligence and care of others for the ſalvation of their ſouls; ſome rejoicing in the comfortable aſſurance of it, and others giving all diligence to make their calling and election ſure: we knew that our ſouls were as capable of bleſſedneſs as any of thoſe that are enjoying God in heaven, or panting after that enjoyment on earth. Yea, ſome ſouls that are now irrecoverably gone, and many others who are going after them, once were, and now are not far from the kingdom of God; they had convictions of ſin, a ſenſe of their loſt and miſerable ſtate; they began to treat with Chriſt in prayer, to converſe with his miniſters and people about their condition: and after all this, even when they ſeem to have clean eſcaped the ſnares of Satan, to be again entangled and over-

overcome; when even come to the harbour's mouth, to be driven back again, and caſt away upon the rocks, O what a loſs will this be!—O thou that createdſt ſouls with a capacity to know, love, and enjoy thee for ever; who out of thine unſearchable grace ſenteſt thine own Son out of thy boſom to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt, pity thoſe poor ſouls that cannot pity themſelves; let mercy yet interpoſe itſelf betwixt them and eternal ruin; awaken them out of their pleaſant ſlumber, though it be at the brink of damnation, leſt they periſh, and there be none to deliver them!

Doct. II. *How precious and invaluable ſoever the ſoul of man is, it may be loſt and caſt away for ever.*

This propoſition is ſuppoſed and implied in our Saviour's words in the text, and plainly expreſſed in Matt. vii. 13. 'Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that 'leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in 'thereat.' The way to hell is thronged with paſſengers, it is a beaten road, one draws another along with him, and ſcoffs at them that are afraid to follow, [I. Pet. iv. 4.]—It is pleaſant ſailing with the wind and tide.—Some derive the word hell from a verb which ſignifies to carry or thruſt in: millions go in, but none return thence: millions are gone down already, and millions more are coming after as faſt as Satan and their own luſts can hurry them onward. You read not only of ſingle perſons, but whole nations drowned in this gulph, [Pſal. ix. 17.] 'The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the nations 'that forget God.' How rare is the converſion of a ſoul in the dark places of the earth, where the ſound of the goſpel is not heard! The devil drives them along in huge droves to deſtruction, ſcarce a man reluctating or hanging back. And though ſome nations enjoy the ineſtimable privilege of the goſpel of ſalvation, yet multitudes of precious ſouls periſh notwithſtanding, ſinking into hell daily, as it were, betwixt the merciful arms of a Saviour ſtretched out to ſave them. The light of ſalvation is riſen upon us, but Satan draws the thick curtains of ignorance and prejudice about the multitude, that not a beam of ſaving

light

light can ſhine into their hearts, [II. Cor. iv. 3, 4.] 'But 'if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in 'whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of 'them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious 'goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould 'ſhine unto them.'

If our goſpel] Ours, not by way of inſtitution, as the authors, but by way of diſpenſation, as the miniſters and preachers of it; and certainly it was never preached with that clearneſs, authority, and efficacy by any mere man, as it was by Paul and the reſt of the apoſtles; and yet the goſpel ſo powerfully preached, is by him here ſuppoſed to

Be hid] If not as to the general light and ſuperficial knowledge of it, yet as to its ſaving influence and converting efficacy upon their hearts; this never reacheth home to the ſouls and ſpirits of multitudes that hear it: but it is never finally ſo hidden, except

To them that are loſt.] So that all thoſe to whom the converting and ſaving power of the goſpel never comes, whatever other knowledge they have, whatever duties they perform, whatever names and reputations they may have among men, yet this text looks upon them all as a loſt generation. They may have as many amiable homiletical virtues, as ſweet and lovely natures, as clear and piercing eyes in all other things as any others, but they are ſuch, however,

Whoſe eyes the God of this world hath blinded.] Satan is here called the God of this world, not properly, but by a mimeſis, becauſe he challenges to himſelf the honour of a god, and hath a world of ſubjects that obey him; and to ſecure their obedience, he blinds them, that they may never ſee a better way or ſtate than that he hath drawn them into. Therefore he is called the ruler of the darkneſs of this world, who rules in the hearts of the children of diſobedience. The eye of the ſoul is the mind, that thinking, conſidering, and reaſoning power of the ſoul; this is, as the philoſophers truly call it, the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, the leading faculty to all the reſt, the guide to all the other faculties, which in the order of nature follow this their leader; if therefore this be blinded, the will, which is *cæca potentia*,

potentia, a blind power in itſelf, and all the affections blindly following the blind, all muſt needs fall into the ditch. And this is the caſe of the far greater part of even the profeſſing world. Let us ſuppoſe a number of blind men upon an iſland, where there are many ſmooth paths all leading to the top of a perpendicular cliff; and theſe blind men going on continually, ſome in one path, and ſome in another, but all in ſome one of thoſe many paths which lead to the brink of their ruin, which they ſee not, it muſt needs follow, if they all move forward, the whole number will in a ſhort time be caſt away, the iſland cleared, and its inhabitants dead and loſt in the bottom of the ſea. This is the caſe of the unregenerate world; they are now upon this habitable ſpot of earth, environed with the vaſt ocean of eternity; there are multitudes of paths leading to eternal miſery, one man takes this way, another that: as it is Iſa. liii. 6. 'We have turned every 'one to his own way;' one to the way of pride, another to the way of covetouſneſs, a third to the way of perſecution, a fourth to the way of civility and morality; and ſo on they go, not once making a ſtand, or queſtioning to what end it will bring them, till at laſt over they go at death, and we hear no more of them in this world; and thus one generation of ſinners follows another, and they that come after approve and applaud thoſe miſerable wretches that went before them, [Pſal. xlix. 13.] and ſo hell fills, and the world empties its inhabitants daily into it. Now I will make it my work, out of a dear regard to the precious ſouls of men, and in hope to prevent (which the Lord in mercy grant) the loſs and ruin of ſome under whoſe eyes this diſcourſe ſhall fall, to note ſome of the principal ways in which precious ſouls are loſt, and to put ſuch bars into them as I am capable to put: and among many more, I will ſet a mark upon theſe following twelve paths, wherein millions of ſouls have been loſt, and millions more are confidently and ſecurely following after, among which it is likely ſome are within one ſtep, one day or hour, to their eternal downfal and deſtruction. There is but one way in all the world to ſave and preſerve

the precious ſouls of men, but there are many ways to loſe and deſtroy them; it is here, as it is in our natural birth and death,—but one way into the world, but a multitude out of it. And firſt,

I. And to begin where indeed the ruin of very many doth begin, it will be found that an ill education is the highway to deſtruction. Vice need not be planted; if the gardener neglect to dreſs, ſow, and manure his garden, he need not give the weeds a greater advantage; but if he alſo ſcatter the ſeed of hemlock, docks, and nettles into it, he ſpoils it, and makes it fit for nothing. Many parents, and thoſe godly too, are guilty of too many neglects through careleſſneſs, worldly incumbrances, or fond indulgence; and whilſt they neglect the ſeaſon of ſowing better ſeed, the devil takes hold of it; if they will not improve it, he will; if they teach them not to pray, he will teach them to curſe, ſwear, and lie; if they put not the bible or catechiſm into their hands, he will put obſcene ballads into them; and thus the offspring of many godly parents turn into degenerate plants, and prove a generation that know not the God of their fathers. This debauched age can furniſh us with too many ſad inſtances hereof. Thus they are ſpoiled in the bud; ſimple ignorance in youth becomes affected and wilful ignorance in age; bluſhing ſins in children become impudent ſins in age; and all this for want of a timely and prudent preventing care. Others there are, of the rude and ignorant multitude, who are bred themſelves much like the beaſts they daily converſe withal, and ſo they are fitly deſcribed, Job xxx. 6, 7. Go into their houſes, and you may ſooner find in the window, or upon the ſhelf, a pack of cards, than a bible or catechiſm; their beds and tables differ little or none at all from the ſtalls and cribs where beaſts lie down and feed, in reſpect of any worſhip of God among them: or if for faſhion-ſake a few words be huddled over in the evening when their bodies are tired, the man ſaith ſomething, he ſcarce knows what; the wife is aſleep in one corner, the children in another, and the ſervants in a third. This is the education multitudes of parents

rents give their children all the week; and when the Sabbath comes, the moſt they learn to know at church is where their own ſeats ſtand, and that it is neceſſary to ſpeak with ſuch a neighbour after prayers, about ſuch or ſuch a bargain or buſineſs for the next week.

And others there are who breed their children as profanely as theſe do ſottiſhly, teaching them by their examples the neweſt oaths that were laſt minted in hell, and to revile and ſcoff all ſerious godlineſs and the ſincere profeſſors of it, ſmiling to hear with what an emphaſis they can talk in the dialect of devils, and how wittily they can droll upon godly miniſters and Chriſtians. Such families are nurſeries for hell; and though God by an extraordinary hand of Providence now and then ſnatch a ſoul by converſion from among them, as a brand out of the fire, yet generally they die as they live, going to the generation of their fathers, where they ſhall never ſee light, [Pſal. xlix. 19.] I know education and regeneration are two things, but I alſo know one is frequently made the inſtrument of working the other, and that the ſavour of what firſt ſeaſons our youth (generally) abides to old age, [Prov. xxii. 6.] We may obſerve all the world over, how tenacious men are of that which is παϱοπαϱάδοτον, delivered to them by their parents. O what a cut muſt it be to the heart of that father, whoſe ſon's life ſhall tell his conſcience what a profane ſon's lips once told his father to his face; If I have done evil, I have learnt it of you. Had they felt more of your prudent correction, it might have prevented their deſtruction: [Prov. xxiii. 14.] 'Thou 'ſhalt beat him with the rod, and ſhalt deliver his ſoul 'from hell.' That this is a common beaten path to hell, is beyond all queſtion; but how to bar it up, and ſtop the multitudes that are engaged in it to their own ruin, this is the labour, this the work. I cannot be large, but I will offer a few weighty conſiderations.

1. Let all parents conſider what a fearful thing it is to be the inſtruments of ruining for ever thoſe that received their beings inſtrumentally from them; and to ſeek whoſe good, they ſtand obliged by all the laws of God and na-

ture. In vain are all your cares and ſtudies for their bodies, whilſt their ſouls periſh for want of knowledge. You rejoiced at their birth, but they will have cauſe to curſe the day they were born of you, and ſay, 'let the day periſh 'wherein I was born, and the night in which I was con-'ceived.' You were ſolicitous for their bodies, but careleſs of their ſouls; earneſt to ſee them rich, but indifferent whether they were gracious. You neglected to teach them the way of ſalvation, but the devil did not neglect to teach them the way of ſin. You will one day wiſh you had never been parents, when the doleful cries of your damned children ſhall ring ſuch notes as theſe in your ears:—" O curſed father! O cruel mercileſs mother! whoſe examples have drawn me after you into all this miſery; you had time enough, and motives enough to have warned me of this place and miſery whilſt my heart was tender, and my affections pliable: had it not been as eaſy to have put a bible as a play-book before me? To have chaſtiſed me when I provoked God by ſin, as when I provoked you about a trifle? One word ſpoken in ſeaſon might have ſaved my ſoul; one reproof wiſely given, and ſet on by example, might have preſerved me. Had it not been the ſame pains to have aſked me, Child, what wilt thou do to be ſaved? as, what wilt thou do to live in the world? Or had but I obſerved any ſerious religion in you, had I but found or heard my father or mother upon their knees in prayer, it might have awakened me to a conſideration of my condition: in my youth I was ſhamefaced, fearful, credulous, and apt to imitate; had you had but wiſdom, as other parents have, to have taken hold of any of theſe handles in time, you had reſcued my ſoul from hell. Nay, ſo cruel have you been to your own child, that you allowed me no time (if I had had a diſpoſition) for any exerciſe of religion; yea, you have quenched and ſtifled the ſparks of conviction, and better inclinations that ſometimes were in my heart. O happy had it been if I had never been born of you, or ſeen your faces. This muſt be the reſult and iſſue of your negligence, except

God

God by ſome other hand (which is no thanks to you) reſcue them from their impending ruin.

2. Let all children, whoſe unhappy lot it is to be born of, and educated by carnal and irreligious parents, conſider God hath endued them with reaſon, and a conſcience of their own, to enable them to make a better choice than their parents did, and that there is no taking ſanctuary from the wrath of God in their parents examples. We read in I. Kings xiv. 13. of good Ahijah, 'in whom was 'found ſome good thing towards the Lord God of Iſrael 'in the houſe of Jeroboam.' Here was a child that would not follow his wicked father to hell, though he had both the authority of a father, and of a king over him.—You muſt honour your parents, but ſtill you muſt prefer your God before them. God will never lay it to your account as your ſin, but place it to the account of your duty and comfort, that you refuſed to follow them in paths of ſin and deſtruction. No law of God, no tie of nature binds you to obey their commands, or tread in their ſteps farther than they command in God's authority and name, and walk in his ways. Your temptations indeed are ſtrong, and diſadvantages great, but the greater will the mercy of your deliverance be. It will be no plea for you at the judgement-ſeat to ſay, Lord, my father or mother did ſo and ſo before me, and I thought I might ſafely follow them; or thus and thus they commanded me, and I thought I was bound by thy command to obey them: therefore look to your own ſouls, if they be ſo deſperate to caſt away their own. If ſome children had not minded their own ſalvation more than their parents minded it, they had never been ſaved.

3. Let this conſideration work upon the hearts and bowels of all ſerious Chriſtians, to pity and help thoſe that are like to periſh under this temptation; and if their parents be ſo ignorant that they cannot, or ſo negligent that they do not inſtruct and warn their own children, you that at any time have an opportunity to help them, have compaſſion on them, and do it. It is true, they are none of your children by nature; but would it not be a

ſingular honour and comfort to you, if God ſhould make them ſo by grace? Thouſands of children (and it may be ſome of you) are more indebted to mere ſtrangers upon this account, than to their neareſt relations; you know not how much good an occaſional word may do them: all have not ability to be ſo publicly uſeful this way, as a late worthy miniſter of our own nation hath been, who, in compaſſion to the dark and barbarous corners in Wales, where ignorance and poverty ſhut up the way of ſalvation to them, at a vaſt expence procured the tranſlation and printing of the bible in their own tongue, and freely ſent it among them. O you that have the bowels of Chriſtians in you, pity and help them! What is it, for the ſaving of a precious ſoul, to drop a ſerious exhortation, as you have opportunity, upon them, to beſtow a bible or ſuitable book upon them? Believe it, theſe little ſums of ſhillings and pence ſo beſtowed, will ſtand for more in the audit-day, than all the hundreds and thouſands other ways expended.

II. A ſecond way to hell, in which multitudes are found haſtening to their own damnation, is the way of affected ignorance. The generality of people, even in a land enlightened with the goſpel, are found groſſly ignorant of Chriſt, the true and only way to heaven, and of repentance and faith, the only way to Chriſt; and thus the people periſh for want of knowledge, [Hoſ. iv. 6.] If the tree of knowledge had been hedged in from the common people, as it is in Popiſh countries, and it had been criminal to find a bible in our houſes, there might have been ſome cloak and pretence for our ignorance: but to be ſtupidly ignorant of the moſt obvious, plain, and neceſſary truths, and yet bred up among bibles and miniſters, O how ominous a darkneſs is this, foreboding the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever! For if the hiding of the goſpel from the hearts of men be a token to them that they are loſt ſouls, how much notional light ſoever they may have, much more muſt they be loſt to all intents, from whoſe heads and hearts too it is judicially hidden. They that know not God, are in the catalogue of the damned, [II. Theſſ. i. 8.] And if this be life eternal to know

know the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, then this muſt be death eternal, to be groſſly and affectedly ignorant both of God the end, and Chriſt the way, by the rule of true oppoſition, [John xvii. 3.]

Look over the ſeveral countries in the profeſſing world, go into the families of country farmers, day-labourers, and poor people, and except here and there a family or perſon into whoſe heart God hath graciouſly ſhined, what barbarous, brutiſh ignorance overſpreads them! They converſe from morning to night with beaſts, though they have ſouls which are fit companions for angels, and capable of ſweet converſe with God. The earth hath opened her mouth, and ſwallowed up all their time, ſtrength, thoughts, and ſouls, as it did the bodies of Corah and his company.—They know the value of a horſe or cow, but know not the worth of Chriſt, pardon, or their own ſouls. They mind daily what work they have to do with their hands, but forget all they have to do upon their knees. Their whole care is to pay their fine or rent to their landlord, but not a thought who ſhall pay their debts to God. They are ſo far from putting unneceſſary buſineſs aſide to make way for the ſervice of God, that God's ſervice is put aſide as unneceſſary buſineſs, to make way for the world: the world holds them faſt till they are aſleep, and will be ſure to viſit them as ſoon as their eyes are open, that there may be no vacancy or door of opportunity left open for a thought of their ſouls, or another life to ſlip in. Or if at any time they think or ſpeak of theſe matters, then the world, like Pharaoh when Iſrael ſpake of ſacrificing, is ſure to ſpeak of more work.—And thus they live and die without knowledge; there is no key of knowleedge (as it is fitly called, Luke xi. 52.) to open the door of the ſoul to Chriſt, he and his miniſters therefore muſt ſtand without; pity they may, but help they cannot till knowledge open the door. Satan is ruler of the darkneſs in this world, [Eph. vi. 12.] that is, of all blind and ignorant ſouls.—Ignorance is the chain with which he binds them faſt to himſelf; and till that chain be knocked off by divine illu-

mination, they cannot be emancipated and made free of Chriſt's kingdom, [Acts xxvi. 18.] 'To turn them from 'darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God.' Ignorance indeed incapacitates a man to commit the unpardonable ſin; but what the nearer, whilſt it diſpoſes him to all other ſins which damn as well as that? By ignorance it is that all the eſſays of the goſpel for men's ſalvation are fruſtrated; that naked aſſent is put in the place of ſaving faith, morality miſtaken for regeneration, a few dead duties laid in the room of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs. Indeed it would fill a greater book than this to ſhew the miſchievous effects of ignorance, and how many ways it deſtroys the precious ſouls of men; but ſeeing I can ſpeak but little in this place to it, let me bar up this way to hell, if it be poſſible, by a few ſerious conſiderations.

1. Let the ignorant conſider, God hath created their ſouls with a capacity of knowing him and enjoying him, as well as others that are famed in the world for knowledge and wiſdom. 'There is a ſpirit in man, and the 'inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding.' The faculty is in man, but the wiſdom and knowledge that enlightens it, is from God; as the dial ſhews the hour of the day, when the ſun-beams fall upon it. If therefore God be ſought unto in the uſe of ſuch helps and means as you have, even the weakeſt and dulleſt ſoul hath a capacity of being made wiſe unto ſalvation. [Pſal. xix. 7.] 'The teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the 'ſimple.' Auguſtine tells us of a man ſo weak and ſimple, that he was commonly reputed a fool in all the neighbourhood; and yet ſaith, I believe the grace and fear of God was in him: for when he heard any ſwear, or take the name of God in vain, he would throw ſtones at them, and ſhew his indignation againſt ſin by all the ſigns he could make.

2. You that are ſo groſſly ignorant in the matters of your ſalvation, are many of you very knowing, prudent, and ſubtle perſons in the affairs of the world. [Luke xvi. 8.] 'The children of this world are wiſer in their

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'generation than the children of light.' Had thoſe parts which you have, been improved and heightened by ſtudy and obſervation about ſpirituals, as they have been about earthly things, you had neither been ſo ignorant or dead-hearted as you are; you might have been as well verſed in your bibles, as you are in the almanacks you yearly buy and ſtudy; you might have underſtood the proper ſeaſons of ſalvation, as well as of huſbandry. The great and neceſſary points on which your ſalvation depends are not ſo many, or ſo abſtruſe and intricate, but your plain and inartificial heads might have underſtood them, and that with leſs pains than you have been at for your bodies. What though you cannot comprehend the ſubtleties of ſchoolmen, you may apprehend the eſſentials of Chriſtianity.—If you cannot ſtrictly and ſcholaſtically define faith; what hinders, if your hearts were ſet upon Chriſt and ſalvation, but you may feel it? Which is more than many learned men do that can define and diſpute about it. You cannot put an argument in mood and figure;—no matter, if you can by comparing your bibles and hearts together draw ſavingly and experimentally this concluſion, I am in Chriſt, and my ſins are pardoned. You cannot determine whether faith goes before repentance, or repentance before faith; but for all that you might feel both the one and the other upon your own ſouls, which is infinitely better. It is not, therefore, your incapacity, but negligence and worldlineſs that is your ruin.

3. How many are there of your own rank, order, and education, all whoſe external advantages and helps you have, and all your incumbrances and diſcouragements they had, who yet have attained to an excellent degree of ſaving knowledge and heavenly wiſdom? How often have I heard ſuch ſpiritual, ſavoury, experimental truths in conference and prayer from plain ruſtics, ſuch ſpiritual reaſonings about the great concerns of ſalvation, ſuch judicious and ſatisfying reſolutions of caſes depending upon the ſenſible and experimental part of religion, as have humbled, convinced, and ſhamed me, and made me ſay, *Surgunt*

gunt indocti, &c. theſe are the men that will take heaven from the proud and ſcornful ingenioſi of the world; not many wiſe, not many learned and acute? Many knowing and learned heads are in hell, and many illiterate and weak ones gone to heaven, and others in the way thither, who never had better education, ſtronger parts, or more leiſure than yourſelves; ſo that you are without excuſe.

4. To conclude; would you heartily ſeek it of God, and would the Spirit (which he hath promiſed to give them that aſk him) become your teacher, how ſoon would the light of the ſaving knowledge of God in the face of Chriſt ſhine into your hearts? No matter how ignorant, dull, and weak the ſcholar be, if God once become the teacher. You are not able to purchaſe, or want time to read many books; but if once you were ſanctified perſons, the anointing you would receive from the Father, would teach you all things, [I. John ii. 27.] your own hearts would ſerve you for a commentary upon a great part of the bible; it would make you of a quick underſtanding in the fear of the Lord: one drop of your knowledge would be more worth than all learned arts and ſciences in the world to you. And is God ſo far from you, and his illuminating Spirit at ſuch a diſtance, that there is no hope for you to find him? Is there never a private corner about your houſes or barns, or in the fields, where you can turn aſide, if it be but a quarter of an hour at a time, to pour out your ſouls to God, and beg the Spirit of him? Miſerable wretch! is thy whole life ſuch a cumber and clutter of cares and puzzles about the world, that thou haſt no leiſure to mind God, ſoul, or eternity? O doleful ſtate! The Lord in mercy pity and awaken thee. Wilt thou not once ſtrive and ſtruggle to ſave thy ſoul? What, periſh as it were by conſent? How great then is thy blindneſs!

III. A vaſt multitude of precious ſouls are loſt for ever, by following the examples, and being carried away with the courſe of this world. It is indeed a poor excuſe, a ſilly argument, that the multitude do as we do; yet, as Junius rightly obſerves, men's conſciences take ſanctuary here,

here, and they think themſelves ſafe in it; for thus they reaſon, If I do as the generality do, I ſhall ſpeed no worſe than they ſpeed; and certainly God is more merciful than to ſuffer the greateſt part of mankind to periſh; they reſolve to follow the beaten road, let it lead whither it will.

Thus the Epheſians in their unregenerate ſtate, 'walked according to the courſe of this world,' [Eph. ii. 2.] and the Corinthians 'were carried away unto dumb idols, 'even as they were led, [I. Cor. xii. 2.] juſt as a drop of water is carried and moved according to the courſe and current of the tide; for look, as every drop of water in the ſea is of one and the ſame common nature, ſo are all carnal and unſanctified perſons; and as theſe waters being collected into one vaſt body in the ocean, unite their ſtrength, and make a ſtrong current this way or that, ſo doth the whole collective body of the unregenerate world, all the particular drops move as the tide moveth. Hence they are ſaid 'to have received the ſpirit of the world,' [I. Cor. ii. 12.] one common ſpirit or principle acts and rules them all, and therefore they muſt needs be carried away in the ſame courſe. And there are two ſpecial conſiderations that ſeem to determine them, by a kind of neceſſity to do as the multitude do; the one is, that they find it the eaſieſt and moſt commodious way to the fleſh, here they meet with quietneſs and ſafety; hereby they are exempt from reproaches, loſſes, perſecutions, and diſtreſſes for conſcience ſake: reſt is ſweet, and here only they think to find it. The other is the prejudice of ſingularity, and manifold tribulations they ſee that little handful that walk counter to the courſe of the world involved in; this ſtartles them from their company, and fixes them where they are. Againſt ſuch ſenſible arguments it is to no more purpoſe to oppoſe ſpiritual conſiderations, motives drawn from the ſafety of the ſoul, or importance of eternity, than it is for a man to turn the tide or courſe of a river with his weak breath.

Add to this, that as one ſinner confirms and fixes another, wedging in each other, as men in a crowd, who muſt move as it moves; ſo they make it their buſineſs to render

all that differ from them odious and ridiculous. So the apoſtle notes their practice, and Satan's policy in it, I. Pet. iv. 4. wherein they think it ſtrange, that ye run not with them into the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you; ξενίζονται, they gaze ſtrangely at them, as the hen that hath hatched partridge-eggs looks ſtrangely after them, when ſhe ſeeth them take the wing, and ſoar aloft, not knowing that they are of a higher kind than her own chickens. And that is not all, they not only gaze at them as a ſtrange generation, making them ſigns and wonders in Iſrael, as the prophet ſpeaks, but they defame, revile, and ſpeak evil of them; repreſenting them as a pack of hypocrites, as turbulent, factious, ſeditious perſons, the very peſt of the times and places they live in; and all this, not for doing any evil againſt them, but only for not doing evil with them, becauſe they run not with them into the ſame exceſs of riot. Thus the world ſmiles upon its own, and derides thoſe that are afraid to follow them to hell, by which it ſweeps away the multitude with it in the ſame courſe.

But O, if the Spirit of God would pleaſe to ſet on and follow home the following conſiderations to your hearts, you would certainly reſolve to take a perſecuted path to heaven, though few accompany you therein, rather than ſwim like dead fiſhes with the ſtream into the dead ſea of eternal miſery.

1. Though you go with the conſent and current of the world, yet you go againſt the expreſs law and prohibition of God. He hath laid his command upon you, 'not to 'be conformed to the world,' [Rom. xii. 2.] 'That 'you live not the reſt of your time to the luſts of men, 'but to the will of God,' [I. Pet. iv. 2.] 'That you fol-'low not a multitude to do evil,' [Exod. xxiii. 2.] 'That 'you go not in the way of evil men,' [Prov. iv. 14.] 'That you have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works 'of darkneſs.' All theſe, and many more, are commands flowing from the higheſt Sovereign authority, obliging your conſciences to obedience under the greateſt penalties; by them your ſtate muſt be caſt to all eternity in the day of

of judgement; you may make a piſh of the precept, but ſee if you can do ſo of the penalty.

2. Other men in all ages of the world, that were as much concerned in the world as you, and valued their lives, liberties, and eſtates as well as you, have yet got out of the crowd, diſengaged themſelves from the way of the multitude, and taken a more ſolitary and ſuffering path, out of a due regard to the ſafety of their ſouls: and why ſhould not you love them as well, and care for them as much as ever any that went before you did? Noah walked with God all alone, when all fleſh had corrupted their ways. Elijah was zealous for the Lord, when he knew of none to ſtand by him, but thought he had been left alone. Job was upright with God in the land of Uz. Lot ſtood by himſelf, a godly nonconformiſt in a vile debauched Sodom. David was as a wonder to many; ſo was Jeremiah, and thoſe few with him, for ſigns and wonders in Iſrael. I demand of your conſciences, what diſcouragements have you that theſe men had not? Or what encouragements had they that you have not? Why ſhould not the ſalvation of your ſouls be as precious in your eyes, as theirs was in theirs? Shall you be impoveriſhed and perſecuted, if you embrace the way of holineſs? ſo were they. Shall you be reproached, ſcorned, and reviled? ſo were they. All your diſcouragements were theirs, and all their motives and encouragements are yours.

3. Is not the way which you have choſen marked out by Chriſt, as the way to deſtruction? And that which you dare not chuſe and embrace, as the way to life? See the marks he hath given you of both in that one text, Matt. vii. 13, 14. 'Enter ye in at the ſtrait gate; for 'wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth 'to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat. 'Becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way which 'leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' And where now is your encouragement and hope, that God will be more merciful than to damn ſo great a part of the world? If you will do as the many do, dream not of ſpeeding as well as that little flock, ſeparated by ſanctification

ſication from the multitude, ſhall ſpeed. You have your choice, to be damned with many, or ſaved with few; to take the broad ſmooth-beaten road to hell, or the difficult, ſuffering, ſelf-denying path to heaven. O then make a ſeaſonable neceſſary ſtand, and pauſe awhile; conſider your ways, and turn your feet to God's teſtimonies; it is a great and ſpecial part of your ſalvation to ſave yourſelves from this untoward generation.

IV. Multitudes of ſouls are daily loſt by rooted habits, and long continued cuſtom in ſin. When men have been long ſettled in an evil way, they are difficultly reclaimed. Phyſicians find it hard to cure a cachexy, or ill habit of body; but it is far more difficult to cure an ill cuſtom and habit of body; but it is far more difficult to cure an ill cuſtom and habit in ſin; [Jer. xiii. 23.] 'Can the leo-'pard change his ſpots, or the Ethiopian his ſkin? Then 'may ye alſo do good, that are accuſtomed to do evil.' The ſpot of a leopard, and the hue of an Ethiopian, are not by way of external accidental adheſion; if ſo, waſhing would fetch them off; but they are innate and contempered, belonging to the conſtitution, and not to be altered; ſo are the ſinful habits and cuſtoms in the minds of ſinners; by this means it becomes a ſecond nature, as it were, and ſtrongly determines the mind to ſin. It is a great matter to be accuſtomed this way or that, ſaith Seneca: yea, it is the very head or root of the matter to be ſo or ſo accuſtomed, ſaith Ariſtotle. Very much of the ſtrength of ſin riſes from cuſtomary ſinning. A brand that hath been once in the fire, eaſily catches the ſecond time. Every repeated act of ſin leſſeneth fear, and ſtrengtheneth inclination. A horſe that took an ill ſtroke at firſt breaking, and hath continued many years in it, it is very difficultly, if ever, to be brought to a better way. What men have been accuſtomed to from their childhood, they are tenacious of in their old age; hence it is, ſo few are converted to Chriſt in their old age. It was recorded for a wonder in the primitive times, that Marcus Caius Victorious became a Chriſtian in his old age. Time and

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uſage fix the roots of ſin deep in the ſoul: old trees will not bow as tender pliable plants do. Hence all eſſays and attempts to draw men from the courſe they have walked in from their youth, are fruſtraneous and ſucceſſleſs. The drunkard, the adulterer, yea, the ſelf-righteous moraliſt, are by long continued uſage ſo fixed in their courſe, and all this while conſcience ſo ſtupified by often repeated acts of ſin, that it is naturally as impoſſible to remove a mountain, as a ſinner's will thus confirmed in his wickedneſs. However, let trial be made, and the ſucceſs left to him to whom no length of time, or difficulty muſt be objected, or oppoſed.

1. Let it be conſidered: the longer any man hath been engaged in, and accuſtomed to the way of ſin, the more reaſon and need he hath ſpeedily and without delay to repent and reform his courſe; there is yet a poſſibility of mercy, a ſeaſon of ſalvation left; how far ſoever a ſoul be gone on towards hell, none can ſay it is yet too late. When Mr. Bilney, the martyr, heard a miniſter preaching thus, O thou old ſinner, that haſt gone on in a courſe of ſin theſe fifty or ſixty years, doſt thou think that Chriſt will accept thee now, or take the devil's leavings? Good God! ſaid he, what preaching of Chriſt is here? Had ſuch doctrine been preached to me in the day of my troubles, it had been enough utterly to have diſcouraged me from repentance and faith. No, no, ſinner, it is not yet too late, if at laſt thy heart be touched with a real ſenſe of thy ſin and danger: the word is plain, [Iſa. lv. 7.] 'Let 'the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man 'his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and 'he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he 'will abundantly pardon.' An abundant pardon thou needeſt; thy ſins by long continued cuſtom and frequent repetitions have been abundantly aggravated; and an abundant pardon is with God for poor ſinners: he will abundantly pardon, but then thou muſt come up to his terms; thou muſt not expect pardon or mercy, when thy ſins have forſaken thee, but upon thy forſaking them; yea, ſuch a forſaking as includes a reſolution or decree in thy will

will to return to them no more, [Hoſ. xiv. 8.] There muſt be a change of thy way, and that not from profaneneſs to civility only, which is but to change one falſe way to heaven for another, or the dirty road to hell for a cleanlier path on the other ſide the hedge; but a total and final forſaking of every way of ſin, as to the love and habitual practice of it; yea, and thy thoughts too, as well as thy ways: there muſt be an internal, as well as external change upon thee, yea, a poſitive, as well as a negative change; a turning to the Lord, as well as a turning from ſin; and then, how long ſoever thou haſt walked in the road towards hell, there will be time enough and mercy enough to ſecure they returning ſoul ſafe to heaven.

2. Canſt thou not forbear thy cuſtomary ſin upon leſſer motives than the ſalvation of thy ſoul? And if thou canſt, wilt thou not much more do it for the ſaving of thy precious immortal ſoul? Suppoſe there were but a pecuniary mulct of a hundred pounds to be certainly levied upon thy eſtate for every oath thou ſweareſt, or every time thou art drunk, wouldſt thou not rather chuſe reformation than beggary? And is not the loſs of thy ſoul a penalty infinitely heavier than a little money? But as the wiſe heathen obſerved, *Ea ſola emi putamus, pro quibus pecuniam ſolvimus; ea gratuita vocamus, pro quibus nos ipſos impendimus*: We reckon thoſe things only to be bought which we part with money for; and that we have thoſe things *gratis*, for which we pay ourſelves. Is nothing cheap in our eyes but ourſelves, our ſouls? Do we call that *gratis*, that will coſt us ſo dear? Darius threw away his maſſy crown when he fled before Alexander, that it might not hinder him in his flight: ſure your ſouls are more worth than your money and all the enjoyments you have in this world. It had been an ancient cuſtom among the citizens of Antioch to waſh themſelves in the baths; but the King forbidding it, they all preſently forbear, for fear of his diſpleaſure; whereupon Chryſoſtom convinced them of the vanity of that plea for cuſtomary ſinning. You ſee, ſaith he, how ſoon fear can break off an old cuſtom; and ſhall not the fear of God be as powerful to over-maſter it in us,

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as the feat of man? O friends, believe it, it is better for you to cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, than having two hands or eyes, to be caſt into hell; where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched!

V. The fifth way by which a vaſt multitude of ſouls are eternally loſt, is by the baits of ſenſual ſinful pleaſures. Some cuſtomary ſins have little or no pleaſure in them, as ſwearing, malice, &c. but others allure and entice the ſoul by the ſenſual delight that is in them. This is the bait with which multitudes are enticed, enſnared, and ruined to all eternity. It is a true and grave obſervation of the philoſopher, that we were impelled as it were to that which is evil, by the alluring blandiſhments of pleaſure. This was the firſt bait by which Satan caught the ſoul of our firſt parents in innocency, [Gen. iii. 6.] 'The tree was 'pleaſant to the eye.' Pleaſure quickens the principles of ſin in us, and inflames the deſires of the heart after it. Every pleaſant ſin hath a world of cuſtomers, and coſt what it will, they reſolve to have it. I have read of a certain fruit which the Spaniards found in the Indies, which was exceeding pleaſant to the taſte, but nature had ſo fenced it, and double-guarded it with ſharp and dangerous thorns, that it was very difficult to come at it: they tore their cloaths, yea, their fleſh to get it; and therefore called the fruit, comfits in hell. Such are all the pleaſures of ſin, 'comfits in hell.' Damnation is the price of them; and yet the ſenſitive appetite is ſo outrageous and mad after them, that at the price of their ſouls they will have them. Thus the wicked are deſcribed, Job xxi. 13. 'They ſpend their days in wealth, and in 'a moment go down to the grave:' that is, their whole ſtock of time is ſpent in cares and labours to get wealth; and when they have gotten it, the reſt of their life is ſpent in thoſe ſenſual pleaſures that wealth brings in, or in making proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts of it. The rich man, in the parable, fared deliciouſly every day, Luke xvi. where his voluptuous life is deſcribed, and in that deſcription the occaſion of his damnation is inſinuated; in a pampered and indulged body is uſually

found a neglected, ſtarved ſoul. But how ſhall the ruin of ſouls this way be prevented?

1. Conſider how the morality of heathens hath bridled their ſenſual luſts and appetites, and cauſed them with a generous diſdain to repel thoſe brutiſh pleaſures as things below a man. What more fooliſh, what more baſe, ſaith Seneca, than to patch up the good of a reaſonable ſoul out of things unreaſonable? That is the pleaſure worthy of a man, not to glut his body, not to irritate thoſe luſts, in whoſe quietneſs is our ſafety. This is the conſtant doctrine of all the Stoics. O what a ſhame is it to hear Heatheniſm out-brave Chriſtianity, and principles of mere morality enable men to live more ſoberly, temperately, and abſtemiouſly, than thoſe who enjoy the greateſt pattern and higheſt motives in the Chriſtian religion are found to do! "Thou embraceſt pleaſure, (ſaith the Heathen) but I bridle it; thou enjoyeſt it, I only uſe it; thou thinkeſt it thy chief good, I eſteem it not ſo much as good; thou doſt all things for pleaſure ſake, but I nothing at all on that account." Theſe therefore ſhall be your judges.

2. Always remember, ſenſual pleaſures are but the baits with which Satan angles for the precious ſoul; there is a fatal hook under them. O if men were but aware of this, they would never purchaſe pleaſure at ſo dear a rate! 'Stolen waters are ſweet, and bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant; but he knoweth not that the dead are there, and 'that her gueſts are in the depth of hell,' [Prov. ix. 17, 18.] Pliny tells us, that the mermaids have moſt enchanting charming voices, and frequent pleaſant green meadows, but heaps of dead men's bones are always found where they haunt: that which tickles the fancy ſtabs the ſoul. If the pain (as Anacreon well obſerves) were before the pleaſure, no man would be tempted by it; but the pleaſure being firſt and ſenſible, and the torment coming after, and as yet inviſible, this allures ſo many to deſtruction: 'At laſt it biteth like a ſerpent, and ſtingeth 'like an adder,' [Prov. xxiii. 32.] If ſin did ſting and bite at firſt, none would touch it; but it tickles firſt, and wounds afterward. O what man that is in his wits would pur-

purchaſe eternal torments for the ſenſual brutiſh pleaſures of a moment! But the pleaſures of ſin bewitch the affections, blind the judgement, ſtupify the heart, ſo that ſober and impartial thoughts find no place. The heart is enticed, the luſts are enraged; coſt what it will, ſinners will gratify their luſts.

3. If you are for pleaſure, certainly you are out of the way to it, who ſeek it in the fulfilling of your luſts. If your hearts were once ſanctified, and brought under the government of the Spirit, you would quickly find a far more excellent pleaſure in the crucifying of your luſts, than now you ſeek in the gratification and fulfilling of them: [Romans viii. 13.] 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live;' *i. e.* ye ſhall live the moſt joyful, peaceful, comfortable life of all perſons in the world; a life of higheſt delight and true pleaſure: for ſo far as your luſts are mortified, the vigorous healthful frame and due temper of your ſouls is reſtored, and your evidences for heaven cleared, both which are the ſprings of all ſpiritual delight and pleaſure. Can any creature enjoyment, or any beaſtly luſt, afford a pleaſure like this? Do not you find the life you live in ſinful pleaſures quite beneath the dignity of a man? And are they not followed with bitter after-reckonings, gripes, and flaſhes of conſcience? Even in the midſt of laughter the heart is ſad, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs. O ponder ſeriouſly what a trifle you ſell your precious ſouls for! Is it not a goodly price you value them at? The fugitive, empty, beaſtly pleaſures of a moment, for the torments of eternity!

VI. There are alſo innumerable ſouls loſt for ever by the diſtracting cares of this world, which eat up all their time, thoughts, and ſtudies, ſo that there is no room for Chriſt, or one ſerious hour about ſalvation. It is too true an obſervation that Sir Walter Rawleigh made on the common mechanics and poor labourers; their bodies are the anvils of pain, and their ſouls the hives of unnumbered cares and ſorrows; whilſt the voluptuous and rich ſpend their time and ſtudies in purveying for new pleaſures,

ſures, and filling their heads with projects of that nature, the poorer ſort have their heads and hearts filled day and night with anxious thoughts and cares how to get bread, pay their rent or debts, and ſtruggle through the miſerable neceſſities that pinch them on every ſide; many children it may be to provide for, and little or nothing out of which to make it; here is brick muſt be made, and no ſtraw to make it with; he borrows here to pay there; debts increaſe, and abilities decreaſe; he toils his body all the day, and when his tired carcaſe calls for reſt to enable him for new work to-morrow, the cares of the world invade him upon his bed, and keep him ſighing or muſing there, when, poor man, he had load enough before for one. And now what room is there left for ſalvation-work? Or how can any ſpiritual ſeed that is caſt into ſuch a brake of thorns proſper? The cares of this life (ſaith Chriſt) ſpring up and choak it, [Mark iv. 19.] Tell not them of heaven and Chriſt, they muſt have bread; talk not to them of the neceſſity or comfort of a pardon, they muſt pay their debts to men. O the confuſed buz and clutter that theſe thoughts and cares make in their heads; ſo that no other voice can be heard! And thus multitudes ſpend their whole lives in a miſerable ſervitude in this world, and by that are caſt upon a more miſerable and reſtleſs ſtate for ever in the world to come; one hell here, and another hereafter. And what ſhall be done for them? Is there no way for their deliverance? O that God would direct and bleſs the following conſiderations to them, if it may be expected they may at any time get through the brake in which they are involved, and find them at leiſure to bethink themſelves!

1. Bethink thyſelf, poor ſoul, as much as thou art involved and plunged in the neceſſities and diſtracting cares of this life; others, many others, as poor, as neceſſitous, and every way as much embroiled in the cares of the world as you are, have minded their ſouls, and taken all care and pains for their ſalvation notwithſtanding: yea, though millions of your rank and order are deſtroyed by theſe ſnares of the devil, yet God hath a very great

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number, indeed the greateſt of any rank of men, among thoſe that are low, poor, and neceſſitous in the world. The church is called 'The congregation of the poor,' [Pſal. lxxiv. 20.] becauſe it conſiſteth moſtly of men and women of the loweſt and moſt deſpicable condition in this world. They are all poor in ſpirit, and moſt of them poor in purſe. 'Hearken, my beloved brethren, '(ſaith James) hath not God choſen the poor of this 'world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?' [Jam. ii. 5.] Now if others, many others, as much entangled in the neceſſities, cares, and troubles of the world as you, have yet ſtruggled through all thoſe difficulties and diſcouragements to heaven; why ſhould you not ſtrive for Chriſt and ſalvation as well as they? Your ſouls are as valuable as theirs, and their diſcouragements and hindrances as great, and as many, as yours.

2. Conſider, your poor and neceſſitous condition in the world hath ſomething in it of motive and advantage to excite and quicken you to a greater diligence for ſalvation, than is found in a more full, eaſy, and proſperous ſtate; for God hath hereby imbittered this world to you, and made you drink deeper of the troubles of it than other men; they have the honey, and you the gall, they have the flour, and you the bran. But then, as you have not the pleaſures, ſo you have not the ſnares of a proſperous condition; and your daily troubles, cares, and labours in it do even prompt you to ſeek reſt in heaven, which you cannot find on earth. Can you think you were made for a worſe condition than the beaſts? What, to have two hells, one here, and another hereafter? Surely as low, miſerable, and deſpicable as you are, you are capable of as much happineſs as any of the nobles of the world, and in your low and afflicted condition ſtand nearer to the door of hope than they do. Ah! methinks theſe thoughts do even put themſelves upon you, when your ſpirits are overloaded with the cares, and your bodies tired with the labours of this life. Is this the life of troubles I muſt expect on earth? Hath God denied me the pleaſures of this world? O then let

it be my care, my ſtudy, my buſineſs, to make ſure of Chriſt, to win heaven, that I may not be miſerable in both worlds. How can you avoid ſuch thoughts, or put by ſuch meditations, which your very ſtation and condition ever forceth upon you?

3. Conſider how all your troubles in this world would be ſweetened, and all your burdens lightened, if once your ſouls were in Chriſt, and in covenant with God. O what heart's eaſe would faith give you! What ſweet relief would you find in prayer! Theſe things, like the opening of a vein or tumour when ripe, would ſuddenly cool, relieve, and eaſe your ſpirits. Could you but go to God as a Father, and pour out your hearts before him, and roll all your cares and burdens, wants and ſorrows upon him, you would find a ſpeedy outlet to your troubles, and an inlet to all peace, all comforts, and all refreſhments, ſuch as all the riches, honours, and fulneſs of this world cannot give; you would then find Providence engage itſelf for your ſupply, and iſſue all your troubles to your advantage. You would ſuck the breaſts of thoſe promiſes in Heb. xiii. 5. Iſa. xli. 17. Pſal. xxxiv. 9, 10. Pſal. xci. 15. Rom. viii. 28. and ſay, all the dainties in the world cannot make you ſuch another feaſt. You would then ſee your bread, your cloaths, and all proviſions for you and your's in God's promiſes, when you are brought to an exigence, and would certainly find performances as well as promiſes all along the courſe of your life.

4. Say not, you have no time to mind another world; God hath not put any of you under ſuch an unhappy neceſſity; you have one whole day every week allowed you by God and man for your ſouls; you have ſome ſpare time every day, which you know you ſpend worſe than in heavenly thoughts and exerciſes; yea, moſt callings are ſuch as will admit of ſpiritual exerciſes of thoughts, even when your hands are exerciſed in the affairs of this life. Beſides, there are none of you but have, and muſt have daily, ſome relaxations and reſt from buſineſs; and if your hearts were ſpiritual, and ſet upon heaven, you would

would find more time than you think on, without prejudice to your callings, yea, to the great furtherance of them, to ſpend with God. I can tell you when and where I have found poor ſervants hard at work for ſalvation, labouring for Chriſt, ſome in the fields, others in barns and ſtables, where they could find any privacy to pour out their ſouls to God in prayer. As lovers will make hard ſhifts to converſe together, ſo will the ſoul that is devoted to God, and in earneſt for heaven. And though your opportunities be not ſo large, they may be as ſweet, as ſucceſsful, and to be ſure as ſincere, as thoſe whoſe condition affords them more time, and greater external conveniences than you enjoy. More buſineſs is ſometimes diſpatched in a quarter of an hour in prayer, yea, let me ſay, in a few hearty ejaculations of ſoul to God in a few minutes, than in many long and elaborate duties. If thou caſt in thy two mites of time into the treaſury of prayer, having no more, thou mayeſt, as Chriſt ſaid of the poor widow, give more than thoſe that caſt in of their great abundance of time and talents.

5. Laſtly, conſider, Jeſus Chriſt is no reſpecter of perſons, the pooreſt and vileſt on earth are as welcome to him as the greateſt. He choſe a poor and mean condition in this world himſelf, converſed moſtly among the poor, never refuſed any becauſe of his poverty: 'God accept-'eth not the perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich 'more than the poor; for they are all the work of his 'hands,' [Job xxxiv. 19.] and that both in reſpect of their natural conſtitution as men, and their civil conditions, as rich or poor men. Riches and poverty make a great difference in the reſpects of men, but none at all with God. If thou be one of God's poor, he will accept, love, and honour thee above the greateſt (if graceleſs) perſon in the world. Poverty is no bar to Chriſt or heaven, though it be to the reſpects of men and pleaſures of this life. Away then with all vain pretences againſt a life of godlineſs from the meanneſs of your outward condition. Heaven was not made for the rich, and hell only for the poor; no, no: how hard ſoever you

you find the way thither, I am ſure Chriſt ſaith, it is hard for a rich man to enter into that kingdom.

VII. The ſeventh beaten path to deſtruction is by groundleſs preſumption; by preſumption they have hope, and by that hope they periſh. There are divers objects of preſumption, amongſt which theſe three are moſt uſual, and moſt fatal; viz. that they have, 1. That grace which they have not. 2. That mercy in God they will not find. 3. That time before them which will fail them.

1. Many preſume they have that grace in them, which God knoweth they have not: ſo did Laodicea, [Rev. iii. 17.] 'Thou ſayeſt, I am rich, and have need of 'nothing; and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and 'miſerable, poor, blind, and naked.' Here is a dangerous conſpiracy betwixt a cunning devil, and an ignorant proud heart, to ruin the ſoul for ever: they ſtamp their common grace for ſpecial; they put the old creature, by a general profeſſion, into the new creature's habit, and lay a confident claim to all the privileges of the children of God.

2. They preſume upon ſuch mercy in God as they will never find; they expect pardoning and ſaving mercy out of Chriſt, in an unregenerate ſtate, when there is not one drop of mercy diſpenſed in any other way. The whole œconomy of grace is managed by the Mediator, [Jude v. 21.] all ſaving mercies come through him, upon all that are in him, and upon no others. God is indeed a merciful God, and yet preſumptuous ſinners will find judgement without mercy, becauſe they are not found in the proper way and method of mercy. Thouſands and ten thouſands carve out and diſpoſe the mercy of God at their own pleaſure, write their own pardons in what terms they think fit; and if they had God's ſeal to confirm and ratify them, it were all well: but, alas! it is but a night-viſion, a dream of their own brain.

3. But eſpecially, men preſume upon time enough for repentance hereafter; they queſtion not but there be as fit and as fair opportunities of ſalvation to come, as are already

already paſt; and in this ſnare of the devil thouſands are taken in the very prime and vigour of their youth; that age is voluptuous, and loves not to be interrupted with ſevere and ſerious thoughts and courſes; and here is a ſalvo fitted exactly to ſuit their inclination, and quiet them in their way, that they may purſue their luſts without interruption. I cannot follow the ſin of preſumption at preſent in all theſe its courſes and ways, and will therefore apply myſelf to the caſe laſt mentioned, which is ſo common to the world.

1. I would beg all thoſe young voluptuous ſinners, whoſe feet are faſt held in the ſnare of this temptation, ſeriouſly to bethink themſelves, whether they are not old enough to be damned, whilſt they judge themſelves too young to be ſeriouſly godly. There are multitudes in hell of your age and ſize: you may find graves in the church yard of your own length, and ſkulls of your own ſize. Men will not ſpare a neſt of young ſnakes, becauſe they are little. If you die Chriſtleſs and unregenerate, it is the ſame thing whether you be old or young; there is abundance of young ſpray, as well as old logs, burning in the flames of hell.

2. If you know the weight and difficulty of ſalvation-work, you would never think you could begin too ſoon. Religion is a buſineſs will take up all your time: many have repented they began ſo late, none that they began too ſoon. Say not, the penitent thief found mercy at the laſt hour, for his converſion was extraordinary, and we muſt not hope for miracles. Beſides, he could never encourage himſelf in ſin with the hope and expectation of ſuch a miraculous converſion. He was the only example of a ſinner that was ever ſo recovered in ſcripture; and this was recorded not to nouriſh preſumption, but to prevent deſpair. If ten thouſand perſons died of the plague, and one only of the whole number infected with it eſcaped, it is no great encouragement that you ſhould make the ſecond. O think and think again, how many thouſands now on earth have been tugging and ſtriving forty or fifty years together to make their calling and election ſure, and yet to this day it is not ſo ſure as they would

would have it: they are afraid after all, time will fail them for finiſhing, and you think it is too early for beginning ſo great a work.

3. Others have begun ſooner than you, and finiſhed the great and main work before you have done one ſtroke. Abijah was very young, ſcarce got out of his childhood, when the grace of God was found in him, [I. Kings xiv. 13.] The fear of God was in Obadiah when but a youth, [I. Kings xviii. 12.] Timothy was not only a chriſtian, but a preacher of the goſpel in the morning of his life, [II. Tim. iii. 15.] What have you to plead for yourſelves, which they had not? Or what arguments and motives to godlineſs had they, that you have not? You ſhall be judged *per pares*, by thoſe of your own age and ſize; their ſerioufneſs ſhall condemn your vanity.

4. The morning of your life is the flower of your time, the freſheſt and fitteſt of all your life for your great work: now your hearts are tender and impreſſive, your affections flowing and tractable, your heads clear of diſtracting cares and hurries of buſineſs, which come on afterwards in thick ſucceſſions: 'Remember now thy 'Creator in the days of thy youth, whilſt the evil days 'come not.' [Eccleſ. xii. 1, 2.] If a man have an important buſineſs to do, he will take the morning for it, knowing if that be ſlipped, a crowd and hurry of buſineſs will come on afterwards to diſtract and hinder him. I preſume, if all the converts in the world were examined in this point, it would be found that at leaſt ten to one were wrought upon in their youth; that is the moulding age.

5. And if this proper, hopeful ſeaſon be elapſed, it is very unlikely that ever you be wrought upon afterwards. How thin and rare in the world are the inſtances and examples of converſion in old age? Long continued cuſtoms in ſin harden the heart, fix the will, and root the habits of vice ſo deep in the ſoul, that there is no altering of them: your ears then are ſo accuſtomed to the ſounds of the word, that Chriſt and ſin, heaven and hell, ſoul and eternity, have loſt their awful ſound and efficacy with you. But it is a queſtion only to be decided by

the event, whether ever you ſhall attain to the years of your fathers: it is not the ſprightly vigour of your youth that can ſecure you from death. What a madneſs then is it to put your ſouls and eternal happineſs upon ſuch a blind adventure? What if your preſumption of ſo many fair and proper opportunities hereafter fail you, as it hath failed millions, who had as rational and hopeful a proſpect of them as you can have? Where are you then? And if you ſhould have more time and means than you do preſume upon, are you ſure your hearts will be as flexible and impreſſive, as now they are? O beware of this ſin of vain preſumption, to which the generality of the damned owe their everlaſting ruin!

VIII. The eighth way of ruining the precious ſoul is, by drinking in the principles of Atheiſm, and living without God in the world.

Atheiſm ſtabs the ſoul to death at one ſtroke, and puts it quite out of the way of ſalvation. Other ſinners are worſe than beaſts, but Atheiſts are worſe than devils, for they believe and tremble: theſe baniſh God out of their thoughts, and what they can out of the world, living as 'without God in the world,' [Eph. ii. 12.] It is a ſin that quencheth all religion in the ſoul. He that knows not his landlord, cannot pay his rent: he that aſſents not to the being of a God, deſtroys the foundation of all religious worſhip; he cannot fear, love, or obey him, whoſe being he believes not: this ſin ſtrikes at the life of God, and deſtroys the life of the ſoul. Some are Atheiſts in opinion, but multitudes are ſo in practice: 'The fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no 'God,' [Pſal xiv. 1.] Though he hath engraven his name upon every creature, and written it upon the table of their own hearts, yet they will not read it; or if they have a ſlight fluctuating notion, or a ſecret ſuſpicion of a Deity, yet they neither acknowledge his preſence nor his providence: *Fingunt Deum talem qui nec videt, nec punit:* 'They ſay, how doth God know? Can he judge through 'the dark clouds? Thick clouds are a covering to him, 'that he ſeeth not,' [Job xxii. 14.] Others profeſs to

believe his being, but their lives daily give their lips the lie; for they give no evidence in practice of his fear, love, or dependance on him. If they believe his being, they plainly ſhew they value not his favour, delight not in his preſence, love not his ways or people; but lie down and riſe, eat and drink, live and die without the worſhip or acknowledgement of him, except ſo much as the law of the country, or cuſtom of the place extorts from them. The dregs of time produce abundance of Atheiſts of both ſorts. Many ridicule and hiſs religion out of all company into which they come; and others live down all ſenſe of religion. They cuſtomarily attend indeed on the external duties of it, hear the word; but when the greateſt and moſt important duties are urged upon them, their inward thought is, this is the preacher's calling, and the man muſt ſay ſomething to fill up his hour, and get his living. If they dare not put their thoughts into words, and call the goſpel *fabula Chriſti*, the fable of Chriſt, as a wicked pope once did; or ſay of hell and the dreadful ſufferings of the damned, as Calderinus the Jeſuit did, *Tunc credam cum illuc venero*, I will believe it when I ſee it: yet their hearts and lives are of the ſame complexion with theſe men's words. They do not heartily aſſent to the truth of the goſpel which they hear; and though bare aſſent would not ſave them, yet their diſſent or non-aſſent will certainly damn them, except the Lord heal their underſtandings and hearts by the light and life of religion. To this laſt ſort I ſhall offer a few things.

1. You that attend upon the ordinances, but believe them no more than ſo many deviſed fables, nor heartily aſſent to the truth of what you hear; know aſſuredly, that the word ſhall never do your ſouls good; it can never come to your hearts and affections in its regenerating and ſanctifying efficacy, whilſt it is ſtopt and obſtructed in your underſtandings in the act of aſſent. And thus you may ſit under the beſt ordinances all your lives, and be no more the better for them, than the rocks are for all the ſhowers of rain that fall upon them: [Heb. iv.

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2.] 'The word preached did not profit them, not being 'mixed with faith in them that heard it.' This is Satan's chief ſtrength and faſtneſs, wherein he truſteth: he fears no argument, whilſt he can maintain this poſt. The devil hath no ſurer priſoner than the Atheiſt; there is no eſcaping out of his poſſeſſion and power, whilſt this bolt of unbelief is ſhut home in the mind or underſtanding. An unbelieved truth never converted or ſaved one ſoul from the beginning of the world, nor never ſhall to the end of it. Thoſe bodies that have the boulema, or dog appetite, whatever they eat, it affords them no nouriſhment or ſatisfaction, they thrive not with the beſt fare. Juſt ſo it is with your ſouls, no duties, no ordinances can poſſibly do them good. As in argumentation, no concluſion, be it never ſo regularly drawn, and ſtrongly inferred, is of any force to him that denies principles.

2. If you aſſent not to the truth of the goſpel, you not only make God ſpeak to your ſouls in vain, which is fatal to them; but you alſo make God a liar, which is the greateſt affront a creature can put upon his Maker: [I. John v. 10.] 'He that believeth not God, hath made 'him a liar.' Vile duſt, dareſt thou riſe up againſt the God that made thee, and give him the lie! An affront which thy fellow-creature cannot put up, or bear at thy hands. Dareſt thou at once ſtab his honour, and thy own ſoul? Are not the things that thou lookeſt on as romances and golden dreams, a mere artifice neatly contrived to cheat and awe the world; are they not all built upon the veracity of God? which is the firmeſt foundation and greateſt ſecurity in the world. Hath he not intermingled for our ſatisfaction, not only frequent aſſertions, but his aſſeverations and oath to put all beyond doubt? And yet dare any of you lift up your ignorant, blind underſtandings againſt all this, and give him the lie? Surely the wrath of God ſhall ſmoke againſt every ſoul of man that doth ſo, and his own bitter, lamentable, doleful experience ſhall be his conviction ſhortly, except he repent.

3. Dare any of you give the thoughts of your hearts as certain concluſions under your hand, and ſtand by them to the laſt, and venture all upon them? Wretched Atheiſt! bethink thyſelf, pauſe awhile, examine thine own breaſt; whatever thy vile atheiſtical thoughts ſometimes are, is there not at other times a fear of the contrary? A jealouſy that all theſe things which thou derideſt and ſporteſt thy wicked fancy with, may and will prove true at laſt? When thou readeſt, or heareſt that text, John iii. 18. 'He that believeth not, is condemned 'already;' His mittimus is already made for hell. Doth not thy conſcience give thee a ſecret gird, like a ſtitch in thy ſide? Dare you venture all upon this iſſue, that if thoſe things you find in the word be true, you will ſtand to the hazard of them? If that be a truth, [Mark xvi. 16.] 'He that believeth not, ſhall be damned,' you will be content to be damned? Or if Rom. viii. 13. be a truth, That 'they which live after the fleſh ſhall die,' you will run the hazard, and bear the penalty of eternal death? If Heb. xii. 14. prove true, that 'without holineſs no 'man ſhall ſee God,' you will be content to be baniſhed from his preſence for evermore? Speak your hearts in this matter, and tell us, do not you live betwixt atheiſtical ſurmiſes, that all theſe are but cunning artifices, and fears that at laſt they will prove the greateſt verities?

4. Hath not God given you all the ſatisfaction you can reaſonably deſire of the undoubted truth and certainty of his word? What would you have, which you have not already? Would you have a voice from heaven? The ſcriptures you read or hear are a more ſure word than ſuch a voice would be, [II. Pet. i. 19.] Or would you have a meſſenger from hell? he that believeth not the written word, neither would believe if one ſhould riſe from the dead, [Luke xvi. 31.] View the innate characters of the ſcripture, is it not altogether pure and holy, full of divine wiſdom and awful majeſty, and in every reſpect ſuch as evidenceth its author to be the wiſe, holy, and juſt God, who ſearcheth the hearts and reins? Look upon the ſeals and confirmations of it; hath not God con-

confirmed it by divers miracles from heaven, a ſeal which neither men or devils could counterfeit? And do not you ſee the bleſſing and power of God accompanying it in the converſion and wonderful change of men's hearts and lives, which can be done by no other hand than God's? Say not, the miracles which confirm the goſpel are but uncertain traditions, and except you yourſelves ſee them wrought, you cannot believe them. There are a thouſand things which you do believe, though you never ſaw them; and what you require for your ſatisfaction, every man may require the ſame for his; and ſo Chriſt muſt live in all parts of this world, and repeat his miracles over and over in all ages, to ſatisfy the unreaſonable incredulity of thoſe that queſtion their truth, after the fulleſt confirmation and ſeal hath been given that is capable to be given, or the heart of man can deſire ſhould be given; and if all this ſhould be done, you might be as far from believing as now you are; for many of thoſe that ſaw and heard the things wrought by Chriſt, contradicted and blaſphemed, and ſo might you.

5. Satan, who undermines your aſſent to theſe things, is forced to give his own; he that tempts you to look on them as fables, himſelf knows, and is convinced that they are realities: 'The devils alſo believe and tremble,' [Jam. ii. 19.] they know and feel the truth of theſe things, though it be their great deſign and intereſt to ſhake your aſſent to them; they know Chriſt is the Son of God, and that there will be a day in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, and that there are torments prepared for themſelves, and all whom they ſeduce from God, [Matt. viii. 29.] If you ungod God, you muſt unman yourſelves; yea, not only make yourſelves leſs than men, but worſe than devils.

6. In a word, let thine own heart, O Atheiſt, be judge, whether theſe be real doubts ſtill ſticking in your minds, after you have done all that becomes men to do for ſanctification in ſuch important caſes! or whether they be not ſuch principles as you willingly foment and nouriſh in your hearts, as a protection to your ſenſual luſts, whoſe

whoſe pleaſures you would fain have without interruptions and over-awings by the fears of a judgement to come, and a righteous retribution from a juſt and terrible God! Examine your hearts in that point, and you will ſoon find the cheat to be in that I here point you to: you have not ſtudied the word impartially, nor brought your doubts and ſcruples with a humble, unbiaſſed, teachable ſpirit to thoſe that are wiſe and able to reſolve them, much leſs prayed for the ſpirit of illumination; but willingly entertained whatever atheiſtical wits invent, or the devil ſuggeſts, as a defenſative againſt the checks of conſcience, and fears of hell in the way of ſin. You are loth thoſe things ſhould be true, which the ſcriptures ſpeak, and are glad of any colourable argument or pretence to ſtill your own conſciences. Is not this the caſe? The Lord ſtop your deſperate courſe; your paths lead to hell.

IX. Precious ſouls are daily plunged into the gulph of perdition by profaneneſs and debauchery. How many every where lie wallowing in this puddle, glorying in their ſhame, and running into all exceſs of riot! The hypocrite ſteals to hell in a private cloſe way of concealed ſin; but the profane gallop along the public road at noon-day: 'They declare their ſin as Sodom, and hide it not;' [Iſa. iii. 9.] 'The ſhew of their countenance teſtifieth againſt 'them.' The hypocrite hath devotion in his countenance and heaven in his mouth; you know not by his word or countenance whither he is going; but the profane hide it not, they are paſt ſhame, and above bluſhing at the horrideſt impieties. Look, as God hath ſome ſervants more eminent, forward, and courageous in the ways of godlineſs than others, men that will not hide their principles, or be aſhamed of the ways of godlineſs in the face of danger; ſo the devil hath ſome ſervants as eminent for wickedneſs, who ſcorn to ſneak to hell by concealment of their wickedneſs, but avow and own it without fear or ſhame in the open ſight of heaven and earth. Wherever they come they defile the air they breathe in with horrid blaſphemies and obſcene diſcourſes not to be named, and leave a ſtrong ſcent of hell behind them. This age hath brought forth multitudes of theſe monſters, the reproach

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and ſhame of the nation that bred them. I have little hope to ſtop one of them in their career and full ſpeed to hell; they have loſt the ſenſe of ſin, the reſtraints of ſhame and fear; and then what is left to check them in their courſe? I cannot hope that ſuch a diſcourſe as this ſhall ever come into their hands, except it be to ſacrifice it to the flames; yet not knowing the ways of Providence, which are unſearchable, and what uſe God may make upon one occaſion or another of theſe following conſiderations, I will adventure to drop a few words upon theſe forlorn ſinners, as far as they ſeem to be gone beyond recovery; beſeeching the Lord to make way for theſe things to their hands and hearts, and make them the inſtruments of pulling ſome of them as brands out of the burning.

1. And firſt, let it be laid to heart, that though the caſe and ſtate of many thouſand ſouls be doubtful and uncertain, ſo that neither themſelves, nor any other know what they are, or to whom they belong; yet their condition is, without controverſy, miſerable and forlorn; all men know whoſe they are, and whither they are going. The apoſtle appeals in this caſe to the bar of every man's reaſon and conſcience, as a thing allowed and yielded by all, [Eph. v. 15.] 'For this ye know (ſaith he) that 'no whoremonger, nor unclean perſon, nor covetous man, 'who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom 'of Chriſt and of God.' This is a clear caſe, there is no controverſy about it. Many there be in a doubtful caſe, but no doubt of theſe, they are faſt and ſure in the power of Satan; and as ſure as God is a God of truth, they that die in this condition ſhall never ſee his face. And to the ſame purpoſe again, I. Cor. vi. 9. 'Know ye not that the 'unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be 'not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor 'adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuſers of themſelves 'with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drun-'kards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, ſhall inherit the 'kingdom of God.' 'Know ye not?' ſaith he, q. d. Sure you cannot be ſo ignorant and blind to think that there

there is any room in heaven for ſuch wretches as theſe. If the righteous be ſcarcely ſaved, where ſhall the ſinner and the ungodly appear? If all ſtrictneſs, holineſs, ſelf-denial, diligence, be all little enough to win heaven, what hope can there be of thoſe that not only caſt off all duties of religion, but alſo caſt themſelves into all the oppoſite ways and courſes which directly lead to damnation? He that refuſeth his food, endangers his life; but he that drinks poiſon, certainly and ſpeedily deſtroys it.

2. As far as you are gone in a courſe of profaneneſs, you are not yet gone beyond the reach of mercy, and all hopes of ſalvation, if now at laſt, after all your debaucheries and profaneneſs, the Lord touch your hearts with the ſenſe of your ſinful and miſerable eſtate, and turn your feet to his teſtimonies. When the apoſtle in I. Cor. vi. 9, 10. had told us the doom of ſuch men, upon the ſuppoſition of their perſeverance in that courſe; yet preſently he adds, as a motive to their repentance, an example of mercy upon ſuch wretches as theſe: 'And ſuch were ſome 'of you, but ye are waſhed,' [ver. 11.] The golden ſcepter of free grace hath been held forth to many as profane and notorious ſinners as you, to a blaſpheming Saul, to a Mary Magdalen, to a Manaſſeth. It is not the greatneſs of the ſin, but the impenitence and infidelity of the ſinner that ruins him. Well then, there is a certainty of damnation if you go, and yet a poſſibility of forgiveneſs and mercy before you, a mercy invaluable.

3. Nay, this is not all; but in ſome reſpects there is more probability and hope of your return and repentance, than there is of many others who have led a more ſober, ſmooth, and civil life than you have done. Your profaneneſs hath more diſhonoured God, but the morality and civility of ſome men ſecures them faſter in the ſnare of the devil; they have many things in themſelves to build up their preſumptuous hopes upon, but you have nothing. It is hard for conviction to reach that man's conſcience that hath a righteouſneſs of his own to truſt in; but methinks it ſhould have an eaſier acceſs to yours, whoſe notorious courſes lay your conſciences naked and

are before the world to be wounded by it. Chriſt's miniſtry had little ſucceſs among the phariſees who were righteous in their own eyes, but it wrought effectually upon publicans and ſinners. Hence Chriſt told them, [Matt. xxi. 31.] 'that publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before them.' Publicans were eſteemed the worſt of men, and harlots the worſt of women; yet the one and other, as vile as they were, ſtood fairer for conviction, and conſequently for ſalvation, than thoſe that thought they needed no repentance. All this is matter of hope, and runs into a powerful motive and loud call to repentance: he that an ear to hear, let him hear.

X. Deep and fixed prejudices againſt godlineſs and the ſincere profeſſors thereof, precipitate thouſands of ſouls into their own ruin and damnation. It was not without a weighty reaſon that Chriſt denounced that woe upon the world, [Matt. xviii. 7.] 'Woe unto the world becauſe 'of offences.' The poor world will be ruined by ſcandals and prejudices: they will take ſuch offences at the ways of godlineſs, that they will never have good thoughts of them any more. 'This ſect is every where ſpoken 'againſt,' [Acts xxviii. 22.] and ſo Chriſtians are condemned διὰ τὴν φήμην, becauſe of the common reproach, as Juſtin Martyr complained. All the ſcandals which fall out in the church are ſo many ſwords and daggers put into the hands of the wicked world to murder their own ſouls withal. Some have ſucked in ſuch opinions of the ways of godlineſs, as make them irreconcileable enemies to them, and fierce oppoſers of them. And from hence are moſt of the perſecutions that befal the people of God. When you ſee ſhowers of ſlanders and reproaches going before, expect ſtorms of perſecution coming after. Slanders beget prejudices, and theſe prepare for perſecutions. O how keen and fierce are the minds of many againſt the upright and innocent ſervants of God, whom they have firſt repreſented to themſelves in ſuch an odious dreſs and character as the devil hath drawn them in, upon their fancies and imaginations! So the primitive Chriſtians were repreſented to the heathens as monſters, and their con-

ventions in the night, occaſioned by the fury of perſecutors, were reported to be for laſcivious and barbarous ends, to deflower virgins, and murder innocent children; and by this artifice the heathens were ſecured againſt converſion to Chriſt. This hath been the policy of hell from the beginning, and it hath proſpered ſo much in the world, that Satan hath no reaſon to change his hand. But how may this plot of hell be defeated, and the ruin of ſouls prevented?

1. It will be impoſſible to prevent the ruin of a great part of the world by prejudices againſt the ways of godlineſs, except thoſe that profeſs them, walk more holily and conformably to the rule and pattern of Chriſt, whoſe name is called upon them. I therefore ſhall firſt addreſs my diſcourſe to the profeſſors of religion, beſeeching them in the bowels of Chriſt, to take pity upon the multitudes of ſouls, which are daily ruined and deſtroyed by their ſcandals and miſcarriages. Did you live according to the rules you profeſs, your well-doing would put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men, [I. Pet. ii. 15.] and conſequently the ruin of many might be prevented. I remember Bernard, ſpeaking of the lewd and looſe life of the prieſts of his time, ſighs out this juſt and bitter complaint to God about it; *Miſera eorum converſatio plebis tuæ miſerabilis ſubverſio eſt:* O Lord, ſaith he, their miſerable converſation is the miſerable ſubverſion of thy people! O, of how many who glory in the title of ſons of the church, may Chriſt ſay, as Jacob did of his two lewd ſons Simeon and Levi, ye have troubled me, to make me to ſtink among the inhabitants of the land? [Gen. xxxiv. 30.]

And how many profeſſors, who pretend to more than ordinary reformation and holineſs, do ſhed ſoul-blood by their ſcandalous converſations? Salvian brings in the wicked of his age upbraiding the looſeneſs of Chriſtians in this manner: behold, thoſe men who boaſt themſelves redeemed from the tyranny of Satan, and profeſs themſelves dead to the world, yet are conquered by the luſts of it. And Cyprian, long before his day, brings in the Heathens thus inſulting over looſer Chriſtians; where is that catholic

law which they believe? Where are the examples of piety and chaſtity which they ſhould learn? They read the goſpel, yet are immodeſt; they hear the apoſtles, yet are drunk. O profeſſors, where are your bowels to the poor ſouls of ſinners? If your neighbour's ox or aſs fall into the pit, you are bound to deliver him if you can; and will you not do as much for a precious ſoul, as you would do for a beaſt? Nay, you dig pits by your ſcandalous lives to deſtroy them. If you ſin, there are inſtruments enough to ſpread it, and multitudes of ſouls ready prepared to take the infection. Say not, if they do, the fault is theirs; for though they are principals in the murder of their own ſouls by taking the ſcandal, yet you are acceſſories in giving it: he is a mad-man that will kill himſelf with a ſword, and he no better that will put it into his hand.

O therefore, if you have any regard to the precious ſouls of men, live up to the rules of your profeſſion! O be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke, in the midſt of a perverſe and froward generation; let the heavenlineſs of your converſation ſtop thoſe mouths that accuſe you as men of a worldly ſpirit; let them ſee by your moderation in ſeeking it, your patience in loſing it, your readineſs in diſtributing it, that it is a groundleſs calumny under which your names ſuffer. Let them ſee by your apparel, company, and diſcourſes, you are not ſuch proud, lofty ſpirits as you are repreſented to be. Convince them by your flexibleneſs to all things that are lawful and expedient, by manifeſting as much as in you lieth, that it is the pure bond and tie of conſcience which keeps you from compliance in all other things, and by your meekneſs in ſuffering for ſuch non-compliance, that you are not ſuch turbulent, factious incendiaries, as the wicked world ſlanderouſly reports you to be. Convince the world by your exact righteouſneſs in all your civil dealings, and by the lip of truth in all your promiſes and engagements, that you have the fear of God in your hearts, as well as the livery of Chriſtianity upon your backs. In a word, ſo live, that none may have juſt ground to be-

lieve the impudent ſlanders the devil raiſes in the world againſt you. Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may glorify your father which is in heaven. Without your care and circumſpection, the ſhedding of a world of precious ſoul-blood can never be prevented.

2. Let me adviſe and beſeech all men to be ſo juſt to others, and merciful to their own ſouls, as not to caſt them away for ever, by receiving prejudices againſt Godlineſs from the miſcarriages of ſome that make more than a common profeſſion of it. If others ſtumble before you, and break their ſhins, do not you ſtumble at them, and break your necks. To prevent this fatal effect of ſcandal and prejudice at religion, I deſire a few particulars may be impartially weighed.

Firſt, Very many of thoſe ſcandals bandied up and down the world againſt the profeſſors of godlineſs, are deviſed and forged in hell, as ſo many traps and ſnares to catch and deſtroy men's ſouls, to beget an irreconcilable averſation and enmity in men to the ways of God. 'They 'deviſe deceitful matters (ſaid the pſalmiſt) againſt them 'that are quiet in the land,' [Pſal. xxxv. 20.] So Jer. xviii. 18. 'Come, ſay they, let us deviſe devices againſt 'Jeremiah, and ſmite him with the tongue.' And there is as little equity in the credulous receiver, as there is honeſty in the wicked forger of theſe ſlanders. With one arrow of cenſure you wound no leſs than three, viz. the honour of God, your innocent brother, and your own ſouls. As to the two former wounds, they will in due time be healed. God will vindicate his own name fully, and the reputation of his innocent ſervants ſhall be cleared and repaired abundantly; but mean time your ſouls may periſh by the wounds prejudices have given, ſo that you may never be reconciled to godlineſs and its profeſſors whilſt you live, but turn ſcoffers and perſecutors of them.

Secondly, Examine whether the matters that are charged upon them as their crimes, be not their duties. Sometimes it falls out to be ſo; and if ſo, you fight more immediately and directly againſt God than men. This was David's caſe, Pſal. lxix. 10. 'When I wept, and chaſ-

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'tened my ſoul, that was to my reproach;' my piety was turned to reproach. They called his tears crocodile's tears, and his faſtings hypocritical ſhadows of devotion and humility. Thus the very matter of his duty was turned into reproach. And ſo it was with the primitive Chriſtians, their very owning of themſelves to be Chriſtians was crime enough to condemn them.

Thirdly, If profeſſors of religion do in ſome things act unbecoming their holy profeſſion, yet every ſlip and failing in their lives is no ſufficient warrant for you to cenſure their perſons as hypocrites, much leſs to fall upon religion itſelf, and condemn it for the faults of them that profeſs it. There's many an upright heart overtaken by temptation. You ſee their miſcarriages, but you ſee not their humiliations and ſelf-condemnations before God for them. "Foul and fearful (ſaith Jeremiah Dyke) was the ſcandal of David; and what was the iſſue! Preſently the enemies of God and godlineſs began to lift their head, and fall upon David's religion, [II. Sam. xii.] They blaſphemed the name of God. O this is he that was ſo grand a zealot, that the zeal of God's houſe did eat him up. This is the man, that out of his tranſcendent zeal danced before the ark. This is he that prayed thrice a day, at morning, noon, and night. This is he that was ſo preciſe and ſtrict in his family, that a wicked perſon ſhould not dwell in his houſe. This your great preciſe zealot hath defiled the wife, and murdered the huſband. Now you ſee what his religion is, now you ſee what comes of this profeſſion of ſo much holineſs and godlineſs." O that men would ſeriouſly conſider their evil in ſuch cenſures as theſe! What! is all this religion? Doth religion any way countenance or patronize ſuch practices? Nay, doth it not impartially and ſeverely condemn them? It is the glory of the Chriſtian religion, that it is pure and undefiled, [Jam. i. 27.] Theſe practices flow from no principle of religion, nor are chargeable upon it, for it teacheth men the very contrary, [Tit. ii. 11, 12.] If I ſee a Papiſt ſin boldly, or an Arminian ſlight grace, I juſtly condemn their principles in and with their practices, be-

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cauſe popery ſets pardons to ſale, and Arminianiſm exalts nature into the place of grace: but doth the doctrine of the goſpel lead to any immoralities? Charge it, if you can.

Fourthly, And as ſenſeleſs a thing it is to condemn all for the miſcarriages and faults of ſome, which yet is the common practice of the world. Are all that profeſs godlineſs looſe and careleſs? No, no; many are an ornament to their holy profeſſion, and the glory of Chriſtianity. And why muſt the innocent be condemned for the guilty? What is your reaſon and ground for that? Why might not the enemies of Chriſtianity have condemned the eleven apoſtles upon the fall of Judas? Had they not as good warrant for it, as you have for this?

Laſtly, You little know what a ſnare of the devil is laid for your ſouls in all thoſe prejudies and offences you take at the ways and profeſſors of godlineſs; and what a woe you bring upon your own ſouls by them. You ſpeak evil of perſons and things you know not, and prejudice is like ſtill to keep you in ignorance of them, "Woe to the world (ſaith Chriſt) becauſe of offences; and bleſſed is he that is not offended at me."

XI. The eleventh way, wherein abundance of precious ſouls periſh in the chriſtianized and profeſſing world, is the way of formal hypocriſy in religion, and zeal about the externals of worſhip. Such a generation of men have in all ages mingled themſelves with the ſincere worſhippers of God; and the inducement to it is obvious, the form of godlineſs is an honour, but the power of it a burden. By the former earthly intereſts are accommodated, by the latter they are frequently expoſed and hazarded. We find in the Jewiſh church abundance of ſuch chaff intermixed with the wheat, which the doctrine of Chriſt diſcovered and purged out of the floor, [Matt. iii. 9. 12.] Such were the phariſees, who were exceeding zealous for traditions, and the external rites and ceremonies of the law, but inwardly full of all filthineſs, [Matt. xv. 7, 8, 9.] Men that honoured the dead, and perſecuted the living ſaints; that reverenced the material temple, and deſtroyed

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the living temples; that ſtrained at gnats of ceremonies, and ſwallowed down the groſſeſt immoralities. And well had it been if this generation had ended with that ſtate and time of the church: but we find a prophecy of the increaſe of theſe men in the latter days, [II. Tim. iii. 5.] which is every where ſadly verified. Religion runs into ſtalk and blade, into leaves and ſuckers, which ſhould be concocted into pith and fruit. Yea, it is of ſad conſideration, that amongſt many high pretenders to reformation, their zeal, which ſhould nouriſh the vitals of religion, and maintain their daily work of mortification and communion with God, ſpends itſelf in ſome bye opinion, whilſt practical godlineſs viſibly languiſheth in their converſations. How many are there that hate doctrinal errors, who yet periſh by practical ones? who hate a falſe doctrine, but mean time periſh by a falſe heart? It is very difficult to reclaim this ſort of men from the error of their way, and thereby ſave their ſouls from hell. However, let the means be uſed, and the ſucceſs left with God.

1. No ſin entangles the ſouls of men faſter, or damns them with more certainty and aggravation, than the ſin of formal hypocriſy. It holds the ſoul faſteſt on earth, and ſinks it deepeſt into hell. There was no ſort of men upon whom the doctrine of Chriſt and the apoſtles had ſo little ſucceſs and effect, as the ſcribes and phariſees; they derided him, when publicans and ſinners trembled and believed, [Luke xvi. 14, 15.] The form of godlineſs wards off all convictions; their zeal for the externals of religion ſecures them againſt the fears of damnation, whilſt in the mean while their hypocriſy plunges them deeper into hell, than others that never made ſuch ſhews of ſanctimony and devotion; 'He ſhall appoint him his portion with hypo-'crites, [Matt. xxiv. 51.] that is, he ſhall be puniſhed in hell, as hypocrites are puniſhed, viz. with the greateſt and ſoreſt puniſhment. Hypocriſy is a double iniquity, and will be puniſhed with double deſtruction; their ungrounded hopes of heaven ſerve but to pull up their wretched ſouls to a greater height of vain confidence, which

gives them the more dreadful jerk in their lamentable and eternal diſappointment.

2. Blind ſuperſtitious zeal, which ſpends it itſelf only about the externals of religion, uſually prepares and engageth men in a more violent perſecution of thoſe that are really godly and conſciencious. The Lord opened a great door of opportunity at Antioch to Paul, the whole city came together to attend the diſcoveries of Chriſt in the firſt publication of the goſpel, and the poor Gentiles began to taſte the ſweetneſs of the goſpel: but the devil perceiving his kingdom begin to totter, immediately ſtirred up his inſtruments to perſecute the apoſtles, and drive them out of the country; and who more fit for that work than the devout and honourable women? [Acts xiii. 15.] Theſe ſtirred up their huſbands, and all they had influence upon, under a fair pretence of zeal for the law, to obſtruct the progreſs of the goſpel. No bird (ſaith one) like the living bird to draw others into the net. Men of greateſt names and pretenſions to religion, if graceleſs, are the moſt dangerous inſtruments the devil can employ to the ruin and extirpation of true godlineſs. Such a zealot was Paul in his unregenerate ſtate.

3. Nothing is more common than to find men hot and zealous againſt falſe worſhip, whilſt their hearts are as cold as a ſtone in the vitals and eſſentials of true religion. Many can diſpute warmly againſt adoration of images, praying to angels and ſaints departed, who all the while are like thoſe dead images which others worſhip. Jehu was a zealot againſt idolatry, and yet the vital power of true godlineſs was a ſtranger to his ſoul, [II. Kings x. 15, 16.] The phariſees ſpared no pains to make a proſelyte, yet all the while were the children of the devil themſelves, [Matt. xxiii. 15.] This is a ſad caſe, yet what more common? The Lord open the eyes of theſe men, and convince them in ſeaſon, that their zeal runs in the wrong channel, and ſpends itſelf upon things which ſhall never profit them. O if they were but as much concerned to promote the love of God, and life of godlineſs

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in themſelves and others, as they are about ſome external accidents and appendages of religion, what bleſſings would they be to the world, and what evidence would they have of their own ſincerity?

XII. The twelfth way to hell, in which many ſouls are carried on ſmoothly and ſecurely to their own deſtruction, is the way of mere civility and moral honeſty, wherein men reſt as in a ſafe ſtate, never doubting but a civil life will produce and iſſue in a happy death. Moral honeſty is a lovely thing, and greatly tends to the peace and order of the world; but it is not ſaving grace, nor gives any man a good title to Chriſt and ſalvation. Indeed there can be no grace in that ſoul, in which civility and moral honeſty is not found; but this may be found in thouſands that have no grace.

That which ruins men's ſouls, is not the exerciſe of moral virtues, but their reliance upon them; they uſe their morality as a ſhield to ſecure their conſciences from the convictions of the world, which would ſhew them their ſinful and miſerable ſtate by nature. Thus the phariſee, Luke xviii. 11, 12. 'God, I thank thee that I am not as 'other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or even 'as this publican:' he bleſſeth himſelf in the conceits of his own ſafety and happineſs; let debauched and prophane perſons look to it, I am well enough; though alas! poor man, his being leſs evil, at beſt could but procure him a cooler hell, or a milder flame. This was the caſe of the young man, [Matt. xix. 20.] and like a young man indeed he reaſons. He ſums up all the ſtock of his civil life, and thinks it ſtrange if that be not enough to make a purchaſe of eternal life, "What lack I yet?" Alas! poor ſoul, every thing neceſſary to ſalvation; the very firſt ſtone was not laid when he thought the building was finiſhed. And this is the caſe of multitudes, both young and old; and that which greatly confirms and ſettles them in this their dangerous ſecurity, is the general, indiſtinct doctrine of ſome, who pretend to be guides to the ſouls of others; the ſcope of whoſe miniſtry aims at no higher mark than to civilize the people, and preſs moral

duties upon them, as if this were all that were neceſſary to ſalvation; nay, it is well if ſome do not induſtriouſly pull down the pale of diſtinction betwixt morality and regeneration, and tell the world in plain Engliſh, that there is no reaſon to put a difference betwixt ſuch as are baptized, and live morally honeſt, and thoſe that have ſaving grace; and they that do ſo, are only a few who are highly conceited of themſelves, and cenſorious of all others, whom they pleaſe to vote formal and moral. This indeed is the way to fix them where they are: if Chriſt had not taken another method with Nicodemus, and his miniſters had not preſſed the neceſſity of regeneration, and the inſufficiency of moral honeſty to ſalvation, how thin had the number of true converts been, though at moſt they are but an handful in compariſon of the unregenerate! O that God would bleſs what follows, to undeceive and ſave ſome poor ſoul out of this dangerous ſnare of the devil.

1. Blind not yourſelves with the luſtre of your own moral virtues, a life ſmoothly drawn with civility through the world; for though it muſt be acknowledged there is a lovelineſs and attracting ſweetneſs in morality and civility, yet theſe things rather reſpect earth than heaven, and are deſigned for the conſervation of the order and peace of this world, not for your ſalvation and title to the world to come. Without juſtice and truth, kingdoms and commonwealths would become mountains of prey, and dens of robbery. Where there is no truſt, there can be no traffick; and where there is no truth, there can be no truſt. Civility is the very baſis of human ſociety, a world of good accrues to men by it, and abundance of miſchief is prevented by it, but it never gave any man an intereſt in Chriſt, or a title to ſalvation. The Romans and Lacedemonians, who periſhed in the darkneſs of heatheniſm, excelled in morality; there is nothing of Chriſt or regeneration in theſe things, how much of excellency ſoever be aſcribed to them. Paul the phariſee was a blameleſs perſon touching the law, and yet at the ſame time, not only utterly ignorant of Chriſt, but a bitter enemy to him, and

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all that were his. Till you can find another way to heaven, than by regeneration, repentance, and faith, never lean upon ſuch a deceitful and rotten prop as mere civility is.

2. Civilized nature is unſanctified nature ſtill; and without ſanctification there is no ſalvation, [Heb. xii. 14.] Civility adorneth nature, but doth not change it. Moral virtues are ſo many ſweet flowers ſtrewed over a dead corpſe, which hide the loathſomneſs of it, but inſpire not life into it. Morality hides and covers, but never mortifies nor cures the corruptions of nature; and mortified they muſt be, or you cannot be ſaved. Take the beſt nature in the world, and let it be adorned with all the ornaments of morality (which they call homiletical virtues) and add to theſe all the common gifts of the Spirit, which are for aſſiſtance and miniſtry; yet all this cannot ſecure that ſoul from hell, or be the ground-work for a juſt claim to any promiſe of ſalvation: all this is but nature improved, not regenerated. Morality is neither produced as ſaving grace is, nor works ſuch effects as grace does. There are no pangs of repentance introducing it; it may coſt many an aching head, but no aching heart for ſin: no ſuch diſtreſſed out-cries, as that Acts ii. 37. 'Men and brethren, what ſhall we do? Nor doth it produce ſuch humility, ſelf-abaſement, heavenly tempers and tendencies of ſoul, as grace doth. Cheat not yourſelves then in ſo important a concern as ſalvation is, with an empty ſhadow.

3. Civility is not only found in multitudes that are out of Chriſt, but may be the cauſe and reaſon why they are Chriſtleſs. Miſtake not, I am not pleading the cauſe of prophaneneſs, nor diſputing civility out of the world; I heartily wiſh there were more of it to be found in every place, it would exceedingly promote the peace, order, and tranquillity of the world: but yet it is certain, that the eyes of thouſands are ſo dazzled with the luſtre of their own morality, that they ſee no need of Chriſt, nor feel any want of his righteouſneſs, and this is the ruin of their ſouls. Thus Chriſt brings in the phariſee, with his

proud boaſt, that he is no extortioner, adulterer, nor unjuſt, or ſuch a one as that publican, [Luke xviii. 11.] O what a ſaint doth he vote himſelf, when he compared his life with the others! Well then, beware you be not deceived by thinking you are ſafe, becauſe you are got out of the dirty road to hell, when all the while you are only ſtepped over the hedge into a cleaner path to damnation. You have had a ſhort account of ſome few of thoſe many ways in which the precious ſouls of men are eternally loſt; let us briefly apply it in the following inferences:

Inf. I. If there be ſo many ways of loſing the ſoul, and ſuch multitudes of ſouls loſt in every one of them, *then the number of ſaved ſouls muſt needs be exceeding ſmall.*—— The number of the ſaved may be conſidered either abſolutely or comparatively. In the firſt conſideration they appear great and many, even a great multitude, which no man can number, [Rev. vii. 9.] but if compared with thoſe that are loſt, they make but a ſmall remnant, [Iſa. i. 9.] a little flock, [Matt. xii. 32.] For when we conſider how vaſtly the kingdom of Satan is extended, who is called 'the God of this world,' from the world of people who are in ſubjection to him; how ſmall a part of this earthly globe is enlightened with the beams of goſpel-light, and that Satan is the acknowledged ruler of all the reſt, [Eph. vi. 12.] But when it is farther conſidered, that out of this ſpot on which the light of the goſpel is riſen, the far greateſt part are loſt alſo; O what a poor handful remains to Jeſus Chriſt, as the purchaſe of his blood!

It is of trembling conſideration, how many thouſands of families amongſt us are mere nurſeries for hell, parents bringing forth, and breeding up children for the devil, not one word of God (except it be in the way of blaſphemy or prophaneneſs) to be heard among them: how naturally their ignorant and wicked education puts them in the courſe and tide of the world, which carries them away irreſiſtibly to hell; how one ſinner confirms and animates another in the ſame ſinful courſe, till they be all paſt hope or remedy: how the rich are taken with the baits of ſenſual pleaſures, and the poor loſt in the brake of diſtracting worldly

worldly cares, except here and there a ſoul plucked out of the ſnare of the devil by the wonderful power and arm of God. On the one ſide, you may ſee multitudes drowned in open prophaneneſs and debauchery; and on the other ſide, many thouſands ſecurely ſleeping in the ſtate of civility and morality. Some key-cold, and without the leaſt ſenſe of religion; others hell-hot with blind zeal and ſuperſtitious madneſs againſt true godlineſs, and the ſincere practitioners of it. Some living all their days under the ordinances of God, and never touched with any conviction of their ſin or miſery; others convinced, and making ſome faint offers at religion, but their convictions (like bloſſoms nipped with a froſty morning) fall off, and no fruit follows. And as rubies, ſapphires, and diamonds are very few in compariſon of the pebbles and common ſtones of the earth, ſo are true Chriſtians in compariſon of multitudes that periſh in the ſnares of Satan.

Inf. II. *How little reaſon have the unregenerate to glory and boaſt themſelves in their earthly acquiſitions and ſucceſſes, whilſt mean time their ſouls are loſt!* They have gotten other things, but their ſouls are loſt. It is ſtrange to ſee how ſome men by rolling a ſmall fortune up and down the world, (as boys do a ſnow-ball) have increaſed the heap, and raiſed a great eſtate, they have attained their deſign and aim in the world, and hug themſelves in the pleaſed thoughts of their happineſs; but alas! among all the thoughts of their gains, there is not one thought of what they have loſt. O if ſuch a thought as this could find room in their hearts, I have indeed gotten an eſtate, but I have loſt my ſoul; I have much of the world, but nothing of Chriſt; gold and ſilver I have, but grace, peace, and pardon I have not; my body is well provided for, but my ſoul is naked, empty, and deſtitute! ſuch a thought, like the ſentence written on the wall, would make their hearts quail within them. What a rapture and tranſport of joy did the ſight of a full barn caſt that worldling into! [Luke xii. 19, 20.] 'Soul, 'take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry;' little dreaming that death was juſt then at the door, to take away the cloth, gueſt, and all together; that the next hour his friends

friends would be ſcrambling for his eſtate, the worms for his body, and the devils for his ſoul. O how many have not only loſt their ſouls, whilſt they have been drudging for the world, but have ſold their ſouls to purchaſe a little of this world! parted by conſent with their beſt treaſure for a very trifle, and yet think they have a great bargain of it. Surely, if poor ſinners did but apprehend what they have loſt, as well as what they have gained, their gains would yield them as little comfort as Judas's money did, for which he ſold both his ſoul and Saviour. Inſtead of thoſe pleaſing frolics of wanton worldlings, what a cold ſhiver would run through all their bones and bowels, did they but underſtand what it is to loſe a gracious God, and a precious ſoul, and both eternally and irrecoverably! The juſt God remains ſtill to avenge and puniſh the ſinner; but the favour of God, that friendly look, is gone; the peace of God, that heaven upon earth, is gone; the eſſence of the ſoul remains ſtill, but its purity, peace, joy, hope, and happineſs, theſe are gone; and theſe being gone, what can remain, but a tormenting piercing ſight of thoſe things for which you have ſold them!

Inf. III. *Hence let us eſtimate the evil of ſin, and ſee what a dreadful thing that is which men commonly ſport themſelves with, and make ſo light of: it is not only a wrong and injury to the ſoul, but the loſs and utter ruin of the ſoul for ever.*

It is ſaid, Prov. viii. 36. 'He that ſinneth againſt me, 'wrongeth his own ſoul.' And if this were all the miſchief ſin did us, it were bad enough; a wrong to the ſoul is a greater evil than the ruin of the body or eſtate, and all the outward enjoyments of this life can be: but to loſe the precious ſoul, and deſtroy it to all eternity, O who can eſtimate ſuch a loſs! Now the reſult and laſt effect of ſin is death, the death of the precious ſoul, [Rom. vi. 21.] 'The end of thoſe things is death.' So Ezek. xviii. 4. 'The ſoul that ſinneth ſhall die.' Sin doth not deſtroy the being of the ſoul by annihilation, but it doth that which the damned ſhall find and acknowledge to be much worſe; it cuts off the ſoul from God, and deprives it of all its felicity, joy, and pleaſure, which conſiſts in the

the enjoyment of him. Such is the dolefulneſs and fearfulneſs of this reſult and iſſue of ſin, that when God himſelf ſpeaks of it, he puts on a paſſion, and ſpeaks of it with the moſt feeling concernment, [Ezek. xxxiii. 11.] 'As I live, 'ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked: turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?' q. d. Why will ye wilfully caſt away your own ſouls? Why will ye chuſe the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon at the price of my wrath and fury poured out for ever? O think upon this, you that make ſo light a matter of committing ſin! We pity thoſe who in the depth of melancholy or deſperation lay violent hands upon themſelves, and in a deſperate mood cut their own throats; but certainly for a man to murder his own ſoul, is an act of wickedneſs as much beyond it, as the value of the ſoul is above the body.

Inf. IV. *What an invaluable mercy is Jeſus Chriſt to the world, who came on purpoſe to ſeek and to ſave ſuch as were loſt!*

In Adam all were ſhipwrecked and caſt away, Chriſt is the plank of mercy let down from heaven to ſave ſome. The loſs of ſouls by the fall had been as irrecoverable as the loſs of the fallen angels, had not God in a way above all human thoughts and counſels contrived the method of their redemption. It is aſtoniſhing to conſider the admirable harmony and glorious triumph of all the divine attributes in this great project of heaven for the recovery of loſt ſouls. It is the wonder of angels, [I. Pet. i. 12.] the great myſtery of godlineſs, [I. Tim. iii. 16.] the matter and burden of the triumphant ſong of redeemed ſaints, [Rev. i. 5.] and well it may, when we conſider a more noble ſpecies of creatures finally loſt, and no mediator of reconciliation appointed betwixt God and them; this is to ſave an earthen pitcher, whilſt the veſſel of gold is let fall, and no hand ſtretched out to ſave it. But what is moſt aſtoniſhing is, that ſo great a perſon as the Son of God ſhould come himſelf from the Father's boſom, to ſave us, by putting himſelf into our room and ſtead, being made a curſe for us, [Gal. iii. 13.] he leaves the

boſom of his Father, and all the ineffable delights of heaven, diſrobes himſelf of his glory, and is found in faſhion as a man, yea, becomes as a worm and no man, ſubmits to the loweſt ſtep and degree of abaſement, to ſave loſt ſinners. What a low ſtoop doth Chriſt make in his humiliation to catch the ſouls of poor ſinners out of hell! Herein was love, that God ſent his own Son to be the propitiation for our ſins, [I. John iv. 10.] and ſo God loved the world, [John iii. 16.] at this rate he was content to ſave loſt ſinners. How ſeaſonable was this work of mercy, both in its general exhibition to the world in the incarnation of Chriſt, and in its particular application to the ſoul of every loſt ſinner by the Spirit! When he was firſt exhibited to the world, he found them all as loſt ſheep gone aſtray, every one turning to his own way, [Iſa. liii. 6.] he ſpeaks of our loſt eſtate by nature, both collectively or in general, 'We all went aſtray,' and diſtributively or in particular, 'Every one turned to his 'own way;' and then in the fulneſs of time a Saviour appeared. And how ſeaſonable was it in its particular application? How ſecurely were we wandering onwards in the paths of deſtruction, fearing no danger, when he graciouſly opened our eyes by conviction, and pulled us back by heart-turning grace! No mercy like this: it is an aſtoniſhing act of grace that ſtands alone.

Inf. V. *If there be ſo many ways to hell, and ſo few that eſcape it, how are all concerned to ſtrive to the utmoſt for their own ſalvation?*

In Luke xiii. 23 a certain perſon propoſed a curious queſtion to Chriſt, 'Lord, are there few that be ſaved?' He ſaw a multitude flocking to Chriſt, and thronging with great zeal to hear him, and he could not conceive but heaven muſt fill proportionably to the numbers he ſaw in the way thither; but Chriſt's anſwer, [ver. 24.] at once rebukes the curioſity of the queſtioniſt, fully ſolves the queſtion propounded, and ſets home his own duty and greateſt concernment upon him. It rebukes his curioſity, and as if he ſhould ſay, Be the number of the ſaved more or leſs, wha is that to thee? Strive thou to be one

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of them. It fully ſolves the queſtion propounded, by diſtinguiſhing thoſe that attend upon the means of ſalvation, into ſeekers and ſtrivers. In the firſt reſpect there are many who by a cheap and eaſy profeſſion ſeek heaven; but take them under the notion of ſtrivers, i. e. perſons heartily engaged in religion, and who make it their buſineſs, and ſo they will ſhrink up into a ſmall number; and it preſſeth home his great buſineſs and concern upon him, 'Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate.'

By *gate* underſtand whatſoever is introductive to bleſſedneſs and ſalvation. By the epithet *ſtrait*, underſtand the difficulties and ſeverities attending religion, all that ſuffering and ſelf-denial which thoſe that are bound for heaven muſt count and caſt upon. And by *ſtriving*, underſtand the diligent and conſtant uſe of all thoſe means and duties, how hard, irkſome, and coſtly ſoever they be. The word ἀγωνίζεσθε hath a deep ſenſe and emphaſis, and imports ſtriving even to an agony: and this duty is enforced two ways upon him, and every man elſe;—firſt, by the indiſputable ſovereignty of Chriſt, from whom the command comes, and alſo from the deep intereſt and concern every ſoul hath in the commanded duty. It is not only a ſimple compliance with the will of God, but what alſo involves our own ſalvation and eternal happineſs in it; our great duty, and our great intereſt are twiſted together in this command; your eternal happineſs depends upon the ſucceſs of it. A man is not crowned, except he ſtrive lawfully, i. e. ſucceſsfully and prevalently. O therefore ſo run, ſo ſtrive, that ye may obtain! If you have any value for your ſouls, if you would not be miſerable to eternity, ſtrive, ſtrive. Believe it, you will find that the aſſurance of ſalvation drops not down from heaven in a night-dream, as the Turks fable their Alcoran to have done in that *lailato hanzili*, night of demiſſion, as they call it; no, no, the righteous themſelves are ſcarcely ſaved; many ſeek, but few find; ſtrive therefore as men and women that are heartily concerned for their own ſalnation. Sit not with folded arms like ſo many heaps of

ſtupidity and ſloth; whilſt the door of hope is yet open, and ſuch a ſweet voice from heaven calls to you, ſaying, Strive, ſouls, ſtrive; if ever you expect to be partakers of the bleſſedneſs that is here to be enjoyed, ſtrive to the utmoſt of your abilities and opportunities. Such a heaven is worth ſtriving to obtain; ſuch a hell is worth ſtriving to eſcape; ſuch an invaluable ſoul is worth ſtriving to ſave.

I confeſs heaven is not the purchaſe or reward of your ſtriving. No ſoul ſhall boaſtingly ſay, there, is not this the glory which my duties and diligence purchaſed for me? And yet on the other ſide it is as true, that without ſtriving you ſhall never ſet foot there. Say not, it depends upon the pleaſure of God, and not upon your diligence; for it is his declared will and pleaſure to bring men to glory in the way, though not for the ſake of their own ſtriving. As in the works of your civil calling, you know all the care, toil, and ſweat of the huſbandman avails nothing of itſelf, except the ſun and rain quicken and ripen the the fruits of the earth; and yet no wiſe man will neglect plowing and harrowing, ſowing and weeding, becauſe theſe labours avail not without the influences of heaven, but waits for them in the way of his duty and diligence: rational hopes ſet all the world a-work. Do they plow in hope, and ſow in hope, and will not you pray in hope, and hear in hope? You that know your ſouls to be hitherto ſtrangers to Chriſt, and the regenerating work of the Spirit; how is it, that you take them not aſide ſometimes out of the diſtracting noiſe and hurries of the world, and thus bemoan them?

"O my poor, graceleſs, Chriſtleſs, miſerable ſoul, how ſad a caſe art thou in! Others have, but thou never felteſt the burden of ſin; thouſands in the world are ſtriving and labouring, ſearching and praying to make their calling and election ſure, whilſt thou ſitteſt ſtill with folded hands in a ſupine regardleſſneſs of the miſery that is haſtening upon thee. Canſt thou endure the devouring wrath of God? Canſt thou dwell with everlaſting burnings? Haſt thou fancied

ſancied a tolerable hell? Or is it eaſy to periſh? Why doſt thou not caſt thyſelf at the feet of Chriſt, and cry as long as breath will laſt, Lord, pity a ſinful, miſerable, undone, and ſelf-condemning ſoul? Lord, ſmite this rocky heart, ſubdue this ſtubborn will, heal and ſave an undone ſoul ready to periſh. The characters of death are upon it, it muſt be changed or condemned, and that in a little time. Bowels of pity, hear the cry of a ſoul diſtreſſed, and ready to periſh."

And you that do not underſtand the caſe and ſtate your ſouls are in, have you never a bible near you? O turn to thoſe places, I. Cor. vi. 9, 10. where you will preſently find the more obvious marks and characters God hath ſet upon the children of perdition; and if you find not yourſelf in that catalogue among the unrighteous, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, &c. then turn to John iii. 3. and ſolemnly aſk thy own ſoul this queſtion, am I born again? am I a new creature? or ſtill in the ſame condition I was born in? What ſolid evidence of the new birth have I to rely upon, if I were now within a few gaſps of death? Am not I the man or woman who live in the very ſame ſins which the word of God makes the ſymptoms and characters of damnation? And doth not my conſcience witneſs againſt me, that I am utterly void and deſtitute of all that ſaving grace, and a mere ſtranger to the regenerating work of the Spirit, without which there can be no well-bottomed hope of ſalvation? And if ſo, are not the tokens of death upon me? Am not I a perſon marked out for miſery? And ſhall I ſit ſtill in a ſtate of ſo much danger, and not once ſtrive to make an eſcape from the wrath to come? Is this vile body worth ſo much toil and labour to ſupport and preſerve it? And is not my ſoul worth as much care and diligence to ſecure it from the everlaſting wrath of the great, juſt, and terrible God? O that the conſideration of the wrath to come, the multitudes all the world over preparing as fuel for it, and the door of opportunity yet held open to ſouls by the hand of

grace to eſcape that wrath, might prevail with thy heart, reader, to ſtrive, and that to the uttermoſt, to ſecure thy precious ſoul from the impending ruin.

EPHES. V. 16.

—*Redeeming the time* (or opportunity) *becauſe the days are evil.*

TIME is deſervedly reckoned among the moſt precious mercies of this life; and that which makes it ſo valuable are the commodious ſeaſons and opportunities for ſalvation which are vouchſafed to us therein. Opportunity is the golden ſpot of time, the ſweet and beautiful flower growing upon the ſtalk of time. If time be a ring of gold, opportunity is the rich diamond that gives it both its value and glory. The apoſtle well knew the value of time; and ſeeing how prodigally it was waſted by the moſt, doth therefore in this place earneſtly preſs all men to redeem, ſave, and improve it with the utmoſt diligence. In this and the former verſe we have, 1ſt. The duty enjoined, walk circumſpectly. 2dly. The injunction explained; 1. More generally, not as fools, but as wiſe. 2. More particularly, redeeming the time. 3. The exhortation ſtrongly enforced with a powerful motive, becauſe the days are evil.

Among theſe particulars, my diſcourſe is principally concerned about the redemption of time or opportunities, which in this life are graciouſly vouchſafed us in order to that which is to come; and here it will be needful to inquire; 1. What the apoſtle means by time. 2. What by the redemption of time.

1. Time is taken more largely or ſtrictly according to the double acceptation of the Hebrew word עת which ſignifies ſometimes time, and ſometimes occaſion, ſeaſon, or oppor-

opportunity, and accordingly is expreſſed by χρόνος and καίρος, *tempus* and *tempeſtivitas*; the latter is the word here uſed, and denotes the commodiouſneſs and fitneſs of ſome parts of time above others for the ſucceſsful and proſperous management and accompliſhment of our main and great buſineſs here, which is to ſecure our intereſt in Chriſt, and glorify God in a courſe of fruitful obedience. For theſe great and weighty purpoſes our time is graciouſly lengthened out, and many fit opportunities preſented us in the revolutions thereof.

2. By the redemption of time we muſt underſtand the ſtudy, care, and diligence of Chriſtians at the rate of all poſſible pains, at the expence of all earthly pleaſures, eaſe, and gratification of the fleſh, to reſcue their precious ſeaſons both of ſalvation and ſervice out of the hands of temptations, which ſo commonly rob unwary ſouls of them. Satan trucks with us for our time, as we did at firſt with the ſilly Indians for their gold and diamonds, who were content to exchange them for glaſs beads and tinſel toys. Many fair ſeaſons are forced or cheated out of our hands by the importunity of earthly cares, or deceitfulneſs of ſenſual pleaſures; at the expence and loſs of theſe we muſt redeem and reſcue our time for higher and better uſes and purpoſes. We muſt ſpend thoſe hours in prayer, meditation, ſearching our hearts, mortifying our luſts; which others do, and our fleſh fain would ſpend in ſenſual pleaſures, and gratifications of the fleſhly appetite. If ever we expect to win the port of glory, we muſt be as diligent and careful as ſeamen are to take every gale that blows, directly or obliquely, to ſet them forward in their voyage. The note from hence is this:

Doct. *That the wiſdom of a Chriſtian is eminently diſcovered in ſaving and improving all opportunities in this world, for that world which is to come.*

God hangs the great things of eternity upon the ſmall wires of times and ſeaſons in this world: that may be done or neglected in a day, which may be the ground-work of joy or ſorrow to all eternity. There is a nick of opportunity which gives both ſucceſs and facility to the great

and weighty affairs of the ſoul, as well as body. to come before it, is to ſeek the bird before it be hatched; and to come after it, is to ſeek it when it is fled. There is a twofold ſeaſon or opportunity of ſalvation. 1. One was Chriſt's ſeaſon for the purchaſe of it. 2. The other is ours for the application of it.

1. Chriſt had a ſeaſon aſſigned him for the impetration and purchaſe of our ſalvation; ſo you hear his Father beſpeaking him, [Iſa. xlix. 8.] 'Thus ſaith the Lord, in 'an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of 'ſalvation have I helped thee:' בעת רצוי, *in tempore opportuno voluntatis, vel placito.* It was Chriſt's wiſdom to ſet in with the Father's time, to comply with his ſeaſon; and it became a day of ſalvation, becauſe it was the acceptable time which Chriſt took for it.

2. Men have their ſeaſons and opportunities for the application of Chriſt, and his benefits to their own ſouls: [II. Cor. vi. 1, 2.] 'We then as workers together with 'God, beſeech you alſo, that you receive not the grace of 'God in vain; for he ſaith, I have heard thee in a time 'acceptable, and in the day of ſalvation have I ſuccoured 'thee. Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the 'day of ſalvation.' He exhorts the Corinthians not to dally or trifle any longer in the great concerns of their ſalvation; for now, ſaith he, is your day. Chriſt had his day to purchaſe it, and he procured a day alſo for you to apply it, and this is that day; you enjoy it, you live under it: that golden day is now running. O ſee that you fruſtrate not the deſign thereof, by receiving the goſpel-grace in vain! Now two things concur to make a fit ſeaſon of ſalvation: 1. The external means and inſtruments. 2. The agency of the Spirit internally by or with thoſe external means.

1. Men have a ſeaſon of ſalvation, when God ſends the means and inſtruments of ſalvation among them. When the goſpel is powerfully preached among a people, there is a door opened to them; [II. Cor. ii. 12.] 'When I 'came to Troas to preach the goſpel, a door was opened 'to me of the Lord.' God as it were unlocks the door

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of heaven by the preaching of the goſpel; ſouls have then an opportunity to ſtep in and be ſaved.

2. But yet it is not a wide and effectual door, (as the apoſtle phraſes it, I. Cor. xvi. 9.) till the Spirit of God joins with, and works on the heart by thoſe external means and inſtruments; as the waters of the pool of Betheſda had no inherent ſanative virtue in themſelves, till the angel deſcended, and troubled them; but both together make a bleſſed ſeaſon for the ſouls of men. Then he ſtands at the door, and knocks by convictions and perſuaſions, [Rev. iii. 20.] ſtrives with men, as he did with the old world by the miniſtry of Noah, [Gen. vi. 3.] Now the door of opportunity is indeed opened, but this will not always laſt; there is a time when the Spirit ceaſes to ſtrive, and when the door is ſhut, [Luke xiii. 25.]

There is a ſeaſon when by the freſh impreſſion of ſome ordinance or providence, men's hearts are awakened, and their affections ſtirred. It is now with ſouls as with fruit-trees in the ſpring when they put forth bloſſoms; if they knit and ſet, fruit follows; if they be nipped and blaſted, no fruit can be expected. For all convictions and motions of the affections are to grace, much the ſame as bloſſoms are to fruit, which are but the rudiment thereof, *fructus imperfectus & ordinabilis*, ſomewhat in order to it; and look as that is a critical and hazardous ſeaſon to trees, ſo is this to ſouls. I do not ſay, it is in the power of any ſoul to make the work of the Spirit effectual and abiding, by adding his endeavours to the Spirit's motions; for then converſion would not be the free and arbitrary act of the Spirit, as in John iii. 8. neither would ſouls be born of God, but of the will of man, contrary to John i. 13. And yet it is not to be thought or ſaid, that men's endeavours and ſtrivings are altogether vain, needleſs, and inſignificant; becauſe, though they cannot make God's grace effectual, his grace can make them effectual; they are our duty, and God can bleſs them to our great advantage. Now there are among others five remarkable eſſays, efforts, or ſtrivings of a ſoul under the impreſſion and hand of the Spirit, that greatly tend to the fixing, ſettling,

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and ſecuring of that great work on the ſoul: and it is ſeldom known any ſoul miſcarries in whom theſe things are found.

1. Deep, ſerious, and fixed conſideration, which lets conviction deep into the ſoul, and ſettles it, and roots it faſt in the heart: [Pſal. cxix. 59.] 'I thought on my 'ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies.' There are cloſe and anxious debates in thoſe ſouls in whom convictions proſper to full converſion; they ſit alone, and think cloſe to their great and eternal concerns: they carry their thoughts back to the evils of their life paſt, then ſmite on the thigh, and cry, "What have I done?" They run their thoughts forward into eternity, and that to a great depth, and then cry, "What ſhall I do to be ſaved?" They deliberate and weigh in their moſt adviſed thoughts what is to be done, and that ſpeedily, for eſcaping wrath to come; thus they fix thoſe tender, weak, and hazardous motions, that die away in many ſouls; and in the loſs of them their ſeaſons of ſalvation are loſt.

2. The firſt ſtirrings and motions of the Spirit upon men's hearts do become a ſeaſon of ſalvation to them, when they are accompanied with ſpiritual, fervent, and frequent prayer: ſo it was with Paul, Acts ix. 11. 'Be-'hold, he prayeth.' It is a good ſign when ſouls get alone, and affect a privacy and retirement to pour out their fears, ſorrows, and requeſts unto God. It is in the eſpouſals of a ſoul to Chriſt, as it is in other marriages; a third perſon may make the motion, and bring the parties together, but they only betwixt themſelves muſt conclude and agree the matter. Prayer is the firſt breath which the new creature draws in, and the laſt (ordinarily) it breathes out in this world. This nouriſhes and maturates thoſe weak and tender firſt motions after God, and brings them to ſome conſiſtence and fixedneſs in the ſoul.

3. Then do thoſe motions of the Spirit on men's hearts make a ſeaſon of ſalvation to them, when they remain and ſettle in the heart, and are in them by way of reſt and abode, following the man from place to place, from

rom day to day; ſo that whatever unpleaſing diverſions the neceſſities and incumbrances of this world at any time give, yet ſtill they return again upon the heart, and will not vaniſh, or ſuffer any long ſuſpenſion; but in others who loſe their bleſſed advantage and ſeaſon, it is quite contrary; [James i. 23, 24.] They are as one that ſeeth his natural face in a glaſs, and goeth away, and forgetteth what manner of man he was; he ſees ſome ſpot on his face, or diſorder in his band, which he purpoſeth to correct, but one occurrence or another chops in, and he forgets what he ſaw in the glaſs, and ſo goes all the day with his ſpot upon him. This was an evanid light purpoſe, which came to nothing for want of a preſent execution; juſt ſo it is with many a reference to their great concerns; but if the impreſſion abide in its ſtrength, if it return, and follow the ſoul, and will not let it be quiet, it is like then to proſper, and prove the time of mercy indeed to ſuch ſouls.

4. An anxious ſolicitude and inquiſitiveneſs about the means and ways of ſalvation, ſpeak an effectual door of ſalvation to be ſet open to the ſouls of men, [Acts ii. 37, and xvi. 30.] 'Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved? Men 'and brethren, what ſhall we do?' q. d. we are in a miſerable condition; O you the miniſters of Chriſt, inſtruct, counſel, and ſhew us what courſe to take! is there no balm in Gilead? No door of hope in the valley of Achor? Alas! we are not able to dwell with our own fears, terrors, and preſages of wrath to come: O for a meſſenger, one among a thouſand, to teach us the way of ſalvation! Thus the Lord rivets and fixes thoſe motions in ſome ſouls, that vaniſh like a morning miſt or dew in others.

5. Laſtly, That which ſecures and completes this work, is the execution of thoſe purpoſes and convictions, by falling ſtraight to the work of faith and repentance in good earneſt, dallying no more with ſo great a concern, ſtanding no longer at "Shall I? ſhall I? When mean while time flies away, and opportunities may be loſt; but bring their thoughts and debates to a peremptory reſolution, as the lepers at Samaria did; and ſeeing themſelves ſhut up to

one only door of hope, there they reſolve to take their ſtation, lying at the feet of Jeſus Chriſt, and caſt their poor burdened ſouls upon him, whatever be the iſſue. When the Spirit of God ripens his firſt motions to this, and carries them through that critical ſeaſon thus far, there is an effectual door of opportunity opened indeed; this is an acceptable time, and day of ſalvation: but O, how many thouſands miſcarry in this ſeaſon, and, like trees removed from one ſoil to another, die in the removal!

But certainly, it is the moſt ſolemn and important concern of every ſoul to watch upon all theſe ſeaſons of ſalvation, when God comes nigh to them by convictions and motions of his Spirit; and to put the ſame value on theſe things that they do upon their ſouls, and the ſalvation of them. This is the door of hope ſet open, a freſh gale to carry you home to your port of glory. Salvation is now come nigh to your ſouls; there is but a little betwixt you and bleſſedneſs. Wiſe and happy is that ſoul which knows and improves its ſeaſon. To perſuade and preſs men to diſcern and improve ſuch ſeaſons as theſe, is the principal work of the preachers of the goſpel, and that ſpecial work to which I now addreſs myſelf in the following motives and arguments:

I. And firſt, who that hath the free exerciſe of reaſon, and the ſenſe of a future eternal eſtate, would careleſſly neglect any ſeaſon of ſalvation, whilſt he ſeeth all the rational world ſo carefully attending and watching all opportunities to promote and ſecure their lower concerns and deſigns for the preſent life? Is not the ſaving of a man's ſoul as weighty a concern as the getting of an eſtate? You cannot but obſerve how careful merchants are to nick the opportunity which promiſeth them a good turn: how your poor ſeamen look out for a wind to waft them to their port, and induſtriouſly ſhift their ſails to improve every flaw that may ſet them on in their voyage; how many miles tradeſmen will travel to be in ſeaſon at a fair, to put off or purchaſe goods to their advantage: no entertainments, recreations, or importunities of friends, can

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prevail with any of theſe to loſe a day on which their buſineſs depends: all things muſt give way to their buſineſs; they all underſtand their ſeaſons, and will not be diverted. But alas! what childiſh toys are all theſe, compared with ſalvation? What is the loſs of a little money to the loſs of a man's ſoul? If a man's life depended upon his being at ſuch a place, by ſuch a preciſe hour, ſure he would not overſleep his time that morning; and had he but the leaſt fear of coming too late, every ſtroke of the clock would ſtrike to his heart: and yet the remiſſneſs and careleſſneſs in ſuch a caſe as this, is infinitely more excuſable than in the matter of ſalvation. Certainly the ſolicitude and care of all the world for the intereſts thereof, yea, your own diligence and circumſpection in temporal things, will be an uncontroulable and confounding ſelf-conviction to you in the day of your account, and leave you without plea or apology for your ſupine neglects of the ſeaſons of ſalvation.

II. The conſideration of the uncertainty and ſlippery nature of theſe ſpiritual ſeaſons muſt awaken in us all care and diligence to ſecure and improve them. This nick of opportunity is *tempus labile*, a ſlippery ſeaſon; it is but ſhort in itſelf, and very uncertain. 'To-day, whilſt 'it is ſaid to-day (ſaith the apoſtle) if ye will hear his 'voice,' [Heb. iii. 15.] q. d. you have now a ſhort, uncertain, but moſt precious and valuable ſeaſon for your ſouls, lay hold on it, whilſt it is called to-day; for if this ſeaſon be let ſlip, the time to come is called by another name, that is, not to-day, but to-morrow. Your time is the preſent time, take heed of procraſtinating and putting it off till that which is called to-day (which is your only ſeaſon) be paſt and gone. This precious inch of time, though it be more worth than all the other greater parts and portions of your time, yet it is as much *in fluxu*, in haſty motion and expence, as other parts of time are; and being once loſt, is never more to be recalled or recovered. For men know or underſtand it whilſt it is current; other ſeaſons for natural or civil actions are known and ſtated, but the time of grace is not ſoeaſily

diſcerned, and therefore commonly miſtaken and loſt; and this comes to paſs partly through, 1. Preſumptuous hopes. 2. Diſcouraging fears.

1. Preſumptuous hopes, which put it too far forth, and perſuade us this ſeaſon is yet to come; that we have before us, and that to-morrow ſhall be as to-day. Thus through preſumption men hope, and by their preſumptuous hopes they periſh; this is the ruin of moſt ſouls that periſh.

2. Diſcouraging fears put it too far back, and repreſent it as long ſince paſt and gone, whilſt yet in being, and in our hands. By ſuch pangs of deſperation Satan cuts the nerves of induſtry and diligence, and cauſes ſouls to yield themſelves as by conſent for loſt and hopeleſs, even whilſt the goſpel is opening their eyes to ſee their ſin and miſery, which is a part of the work for their recovery. Thus thouſands are blinded, that they cannot diſcern the ſeaſon of mercy, and ſo it ſlides from them, as if it had never been. God came near them in the means of their converſion, yea, and nearer in the motions of his Spirit upon their conſciences and affections; but they knew not the time of their viſitation, and now the things of their peace are hid from their eyes. Had thoſe convictions been obeyed, and thoſe purpoſes that were begotten in their hearts been followed by anſwerable executions of them, happy had they been to all eternity; but their careleſs neglects have quenched them, and the door is ſhut, and who knows whether it may be opened any more? O dally not with the Spirit of God, reſiſt not his calls; his motions on the ſoul are tender things; they may ſoon be quenched, and never recovered!

III. Neglect not the ſeaſons of mercy, the day of grace, becauſe opportunity facilitates the great work of your ſalvation: it is much eaſier to be done in ſuch a ſeaſon than it can be afterwards; an impreſſion is eaſily made on wax when melted; but ſtay till it be hardened, and if you lay the greateſt weight on the ſeal, it leaves not its impreſs upon it. Much ſo it is with the heart; there is a ſeaſon when God makes it ſoft and yielding, when the affections

are

are thawed and melted under the word. Conſcience is full of ſenſe and activity, the will pliable: now is the time to ſet in with the motions of the Spirit; there is now a gale from heaven, if you will take it; and if not, it tarries not for man, nor waits for the ſons of men. Neglect of the ſeaſon is the loſs of the ſoul. The heart, like melted wax, will naturally harden again; and then to how little purpoſe are your own feeble eſſays? [Heb. iii. 15.] It is both eaſy and ſucceſsful ſtriving, when the Spirit of God ſtrives in you, and with you; you are now workers together with God, and ſuch work goes on ſmoothly and ſweetly: that which is in motion is eaſily moved; but if once the heart be ſet, you may tug to little purpoſe.

IV. The infinite importance and weight of ſalvation is alone inſtead of all motives and arguments to make men prize and improve every proper ſeaſon for it. It is no ordinary concern, it is your life, yea, it is your eternal life. The ſolemnity and awfulneſs of ſuch a buſineſs as this is enough to ſwallow up the ſpirit of a man. O what an awful ſound have ſuch words as theſe, 'Ever with 'the Lord!' Suppoſe you ſaw the glory of heaven, the full reward of all the labours and ſufferings of the ſaints, the bleſſed harveſt of all their prayers, tears, diligence, and ſelf-denial in this world; or ſuppoſe you had a true repreſentation of the torments of hell, and could but hear the wailings of the damned for the neglect of the ſeaſon of mercy, and their paſſionate, but vain wiſhes for one of thoſe days which they have loſt; would you think any care, any pains, any ſelf-denial too much to ſave and redeem one of thoſe opportunities? Surely you would have a far higher eſtimation of them than ever you had in your lives. A trial for a man's whole eſtate is accounted a ſolemn buſineſs among men; the caſt of a dye for a man's life is a weighty action, and ſeldom done without anxiety of mind, and trembling of the hand; yet both theſe are but children's play, compared with ſalvation-work.

Three things put an unſpeakable ſolemnity upon this matter: it is the precious ſoul, which is above all valu-

ation, that lies at ſtake, and is to be ſaved or loſt. The ſaving or loſing of it is not for a time, but for ever; and this is the only ſeaſon in which it will be eternally ſaved, or caſt away: all hangs upon a little inch of time; which being over-ſlipt, and loſt, is never more to be recalled or recovered. Lord, with what ſerious ſpirits, deep and weighty conſideration, fears and tremblings of heart, ſhould men and women attend the ſeaſon of their ſalvation! Believe it, reader, ſince thy ſoul projected its firſt thought, there never was a more weighty and concerning ſubject than this preſented to thy thoughts. O therefore let not thy thoughts trifle about it, and ſlide from it as they uſe to do in other things of common concernment.

V. If we value the true pleaſures of life, or ſolid comfort of our ſouls at death, let us by no means neglect the ſpecial ſeaſons and opportunities of ſalvation we now enjoy. Theſe two things, the pleaſures of life, and comfort in death, ſhould be prized by every man more than his two eyes: certainly no being at all is more deſirable than a being without theſe. Take away the true ſpiritual pleaſure of life, and you level the life of man with the beaſt that periſheth: and take away the hope and comfort of the ſoul in death, and you ſink him infinitely below the beaſt, and make him a being only capable of miſery for ever.

Now there can be no true ſpiritual pleaſure found in that ſoul that has neglected and loſt his only ſeaſon of ſalvation; all the ſolid delight and comfort of life reſult from the ſettlement and ſecurity of a man's great concern in the proper ſeaſon thereof. The true mirth of the converted prodigal bears date from the time of his return and reconciliation to his father, [Luke xv. 24.] Two things are abſolutely pre-requiſite to the comfort of life, viz. a change of the ſtate by juſtification, and a change of the frame and temper of the heart by ſanctification. To be in a pardoned ſtate is matter of all joy, [Matt. ix. 2.] and 'to be ſpiritually-minded is life and peace,' [Rom. viii. 6.] No good news comes to any man before this, and no bad news can ſink a man's heart after this. And for hope

and

and comfort in death, let none be ſo fond to expect it, till he have firſt complied with, and obeyed God's call in the time thereof; a careleſs life never did, nor never will produce a comfortable death. What is more common among all that die not ſtupid and ſenſeleſs, as well as unregenerate and Chriſtleſs, than the bitter dolorous complaints of their miſ-ſpent time, and loſing their ſeaſon of mercy? Reader, if thou wouldſt not feel that anguiſh thou haſt ſeen and heard others to be in on that account, know the time of thy viſitation, and finiſh thy great work whilſt it is day.

VI. Neglect no ſeaſon of ſalvation which is graciouſly afforded you, becauſe your time is ſhort, death and eternity are at the door. You know that you muſt ſhortly put off theſe tabernacles, [II. Pet. i. 13, 14.] that when a few years are come, you ſhall go the way whence you ſhall not return, [Job xvi. 22.] all the living are liſted ſoldiers, and muſt conflict hand to hand with that dreadful enemy, death, and there is no diſcharge in that war, [Eccleſ. viii. 8.] It will be in vain to ſay, you are not willing to die, for willing or unwilling, away you muſt go when death calls you. It will be as vain to ſay, you are not ready; for ready or unready, you muſt be gone when death comes: your readineſs to die would indeed be a cordial to your hearts in death; but then you muſt improve and ply the time of life, and huſband your opportunities diligently; careleſſneſs of life, and readineſs for death, are inconſiſtent, and excluſive of each other. The bed is ſweeter to none than the hard labourer, and the grave comfortable to none but the laborious Chriſtian. You know nothing can be done by you after death; the compoſitum is then diſſolved; you ceaſe to be what you were, to enjoy the means you had, and to work as you did. O therefore ſlip not the only ſeaſon you have both of attaining the end of life, and eſcaping the danger and hour of death!

I ſhall cloſe all with a word of exhortation, perſuading (if poſſible) the careleſs and unthinking neglecters of their precious time and ſouls, to awake out of that deep and dangerous ſecurity in which they lie faſt aſleep on the very brink of eternity; and 'to-day, whilſt it is yet called to-

'day,'

'day,' to hear God's voice calling them to repentance and faith, and thereby to Chriſt and everlaſting bleſſedneſs.—'Behold, he yet ſtands at the door and knocks,' [Rev. iii. 20.] the door of hope is not yet finally ſhut, there are yet ſome ſtirrings at certain times in men's conſciences; God comes near them in his word, and in ſome rouzing acts of Providence, the death of a near relation, the ſeizure of a dangerous diſeaſe, the blaſting and diſappointment of a man's great deſign and project for this world, a fall into ſome notorious ſin; theſe and ſuch like methods of Providence, as well as the convincing voice of the word, have the efficacy of an awakening voice to men's drowſy conſciences; and if careleſs ſinners would but attend to them, and follow home thoſe motions they make upon their hearts, who knows to what theſe weak beginnings might ariſe and proſper? The ſouls of men are, as it were, embarked in the calls of God, your life is bound up in them; if theſe be loſt, your ſouls are loſt; if theſe abide upon you, and grow up to ſound converſion, you are ſaved by them. More particularly conſider,

1. What a mercy it is to have your lot providentially caſt under the goſpel: to be born under, and bred up with the means and inſtruments of converſion and ſalvation. We have lived from our youth up under the calls of God, and within the joyful ſound of the goſpel: 'God hath not dealt ſo with other nations,' [Pſal. cxlvii. 20.] Though others ſhould ſeek the means of life, they cannot find them; and though you ſeek them not, you can hardly miſs them.

2. How great a mercy is it to have your lives lengthened out hitherto by God's patience under the goſpel! That neither that golden lamp, nor the lamp of your life (both which are liable to be extinguiſhed every moment) are yet put out. Thouſands and ten thouſands, your contemporaries, are gone out of the hearing of the voice of the goſpel; they ſhall never hear another call, the treaty of God is ended with them, the maſter of the houſe is riſen up, and the doors are ſhut. Your neglects and provocations have not been inferior to theirs, but God's patience

patience and goodneſs has exceeded and abounded to you beyond whatever it did to them.

3. Bethink yourſelves what an aggravation of your miſery it will be to ſink into hell with the calls of God ſounding in your ears! to ſink into eternal miſery betwixt the tender, out-ſtretched arms of mercy; this is the hell of hell, the emphaſis of damnation, the racking engine on which the conſciences of the damned are tortured. 'And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, 'ſhalt be brought down to hell,' [Matt. xi. 23.] Such a fall, after ſo high an exaltation, is the very ſtrappado which will torment your conſciences. Hell will prove a cooler and milder place to the heathens that never enjoyed your light, means, and mercies in this world, than it will to you. None ſink ſo deep into miſery in the world to come, as they that fall from the faireſt opportunities of ſalvation in this world.

4. Let no man expect that God will hear his cries and intreaties in time of miſery, who neglects and ſlights the calls of God in time of mercy. God calls, but men will not hear; the day is coming 'when they ſhall cry, but 'God will not hear,' [Prov. i. 24, 25.] 'Will God 'hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?' [Job xxvii. 9.] No, no, he will not; and this is but a juſt retribution from the righteous God, whoſe calls and counſels men have ſet at nought; but whatever men now think of it, it is certainly the greateſt miſery incident to man in all the world: for as no words can make another fully ſenſible what a privilege it is to have the ear, favour, pity, and help of God in a day of ſtraits; ſo it is impoſſible for any words to expreſs the doleful ſtate and caſe of that ſoul whom God caſts off in trouble, and whoſe cries he ſhuts out.

5. Beware of neglecting any call of God, becauſe that call you are now tempted to neglect, may be the laſt call ever God intends to give thy ſoul. Sure I am, there is a call which will be the laſt call of God to rebellious ſinners, and after that no more calls, but an eternal deep ſilence; 'His Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man; and the

more motions and calls you have already ſlighted, the more probable it is that this may be the laſt voice of God in a way of mercy to thy ſoul; and what if after this God ſhould ſeal up thy heart, and judicially harden it? Make thy will utterly inflexible, and thine ears deaf, as he threatens, [Iſa. vi. 10.] What an undone miſerable man or woman art thou then! O beware of provoking the ſoreſt of all judgements by perſiſting any longer in a courſe of rebellion againſt light and mercy!

6. Whilſt your hearts put off and neglect God's calls, you can by no means arrive to the evidence and aſſurance of your election: for your election is only ſecured by your effectual calling, [II. Pet. i. 10.] There is no way for men to diſcern their names written in the book of life, but by reading the work of ſanctification in their hearts, [Rom. x. 8.] I deſire no miraculous voice from heaven, no extraordinary ſigns, or unſcriptural notices and informations in this matter: Lord, let me but find my heart complying with thy calls, my will obediently ſubmitting to thy commands; ſin my burden, and Chriſt my deſire: I never crave a fairer or ſurer evidence of thy electing love to my ſoul; and if I had an oracle from heaven, an extraordiuary meſſenger from the other world, to tell me thou loveſt me, I have no reaſon to credit ſuch a voice, whilſt I find my heart wholly ſenſual, averſe to God, and indiſpoſed to all that is ſpiritual.

7. What reaſon have you why you ſhould not preſently embrace the call of God, and thankfully lay hold on the firſt opportunity and ſeaſon of ſalvation? Have you any greater matters in hand than the ſalvation of your precious ſouls? Is there any thing in the world that more concerns you? If the affairs of this life be ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary, and thoſe of the world to come ſo indifferent; if you think meat and drink, trade and buſineſs, wife and children, be ſo great things, and Chriſt, ſoul and eternity ſo little things; or though you think ſalvation of the greateſt neceſſity, yet it may ſafely enough be put off to an uncertain time, I may aſſure you, you will not long be of this mind. How ſoon are all the miſtakes of men

in theſe matters rectified in a few moments after death? Rectified, I ſay, but not remedied; your opinion will be changed, but not your condition.

8. Do you not every day eaſily and readily obey the calls of Satan and your luſts, whilſt God and conſcience are ſuffered to call and ſtrive in vain? If Satan or your luſts call you to the tavern, to the world, and ſinful pleaſures, you ſpeedily comply with their call, and yield a ready obedience: if pride, covetouſneſs, or paſſion and revenge call, they need not call twice; and ſhall God and conſcience call only in vain? Lord, what a creature is man become! If a vain companion call, you have no power to deny; if God call, you have no ear to hear him.

9. You cannot but obſerve the obedience and diligence of many others, how ſeriouſly, painfully, and aſſiduouſly they ply and follow the work of their own ſalvation, and yet are no more concerned in the events and conſequences of theſe things than you are. Doth it not trouble you when you compare yourſelves with them? Do not ſuch thoughts as theſe ſometimes ariſe upon ſuch obſervations? "Lord, what a difference is there like to be betwixt their end and mine, when there is ſo apparent a difference in our courſe and converſation?" Doth not God diſtinguiſh perſons in this world by the frames of their hearts and tenor of their lives, in order to the great diſtinction he will make betwixt one and another in the day of judgement? Have not I as precious a ſoul to ſave, or loſe, as any of them? What is the matter that I ſit with folded arms, whilſt they are working out their ſalvation with fear and trembling? Why ſhould any man or woman in the world be more careful for their ſouls, than I for mine? Surely its capacity and excellency is equal with theirs, though my care and diligence be ſo unequal.

10. To conclude: God will ſhortly give you an irreſiſtible call to the grave, and after that his voice ſhall call to you in your graves, "Ariſe, ye dead, and come to judgement;" but woe be to you, woe and alas that ever you

were born, if you ſhould hear the call of God to die, before you have heard and obeyed his call to Chriſt! Will your death-bed be eaſy to you? Can you with any hope or comfort ſhoot the gulph of eternity, before you have done one act for the ſecuring your ſouls from the wrath to come? It is a dreadful thing for a poor Chriſtleſs ſoul to ſit quivering upon the lips of a dying ſinner, not able to ſtay, nor yet to endure a parting pull from the body in ſuch a caſe as it is.

In a word; if the God that made, and will ſhortly judge you; if the Redeemer that ſhed his invaluable blood, and now offers you the purchaſes and beneſits of it; if you have any love to, or care of your own ſouls, which are more worth than the whole world; if you have any value for heaven, or dread of hell, then for God's ſake, for Chriſt's ſake, for your precious ſoul's ſake, trifle with heaven and hell no longer, but be in earneſt to work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling. Could I think of any other means or motives to ſecure your ſouls from danger, I would ſurely uſe them. Could I reach your hearts effectually, I would deeply impreſs this great concern upon them; but I can neither do God's part of the work, nor yours; it is ſome eaſe to me I have in ſincerity (though with much imperfection and feebleneſs) done part of my own: the Lord proſper it by the bleſſing of his Spirit on the hearts of them that read it. Amen.

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